



Draft
Strategic Plan
2021 - 2026

October 2020

University of Amsterdam



Introduction

At the UvA we are proud to be among the best universities in virtually all of our scientific disciplines. That is where our strength lies. As a vanguard player, we also have a duty, together with other knowledge institutions in Amsterdam and beyond, to contribute to the solution of complex and interdisciplinary issues. Think of the climate, historical and social inequality, migration and populism, freedom and the rule of law, revolutionary medical and digital technologies. Or the coronavirus and the associated uncertainty about the future. The corona crisis is different from previous crises because, more than ever before, the fight against the virus calls for global scientific cooperation. While our world is changing rapidly, our role is unabated. We educate the next generation to shape it and we widen the horizons of the scientific knowledge needed to do so.

In this strategic plan, we explore what is needed to maintain our position and how we can realise our ambitions for the 2020s. Key words are talent, agility, responsibility and digitisation - concepts that were already foremost in our minds before the corona crisis. Our devotion of time and intellect to a better world through science will be undiminished - despite the as yet unclear effects of the corona crisis on international science and our budgets. And even though our immediate future may somewhat different than we thought at the beginning of 2020 - more digital, more agile - this has not substantially changed the ambitions in this plan.

However, we have to take into account the continuous high workload. For many of our people, it is even higher than at the beginning of 2020. The trick will be to increase the effectiveness and collectivity of our efforts within existing budgets, always guided by the question 'what is the university for?' In addition, we do not shy away from the issues that our university (too) has concerning the social safety and mental health of students and staff.

This strategic plan has a layered structure. Chapter 1 outlines the main points: the core values of the UvA, our challenges and six related main ambitions that arise from them. These are followed by six chapters, each with an elaboration of one of the main ambitions (chapters 2 to 7). Each elaboration - i.e. each chapter - contains a set of partial ambitions (the paragraphs in each chapter). These end with a few concrete steps to realise the ambitions. The table of contents with the titles of the main and partial ambitions can be read as a brief summary of the plan.

Meanwhile, the starting positions and elaborations of the ambitions differ. In part, this fits in with a plan that looks ahead over a six year period. In addition, it offers scope to set priorities and make adjustments in the course of further detailing and implementation of our ambitions. Halfway through the planning period, at the beginning of 2024, we will draw up an interim assessment to see how far we have come and which adjustments will required by developments within and outside the UvA.

Table of contents

Introduction	2
1. Outline: our challenges and drivers for the coming years	4
2. Education & Research: we continue to deliver top quality across the board	6
2.1 Focusing more strategically in research programming.....	7
2.2 Encouraging closer collaboration between disciplines	8
2.3 Reviewing the connection of our education to research and societal questions	9
2.4 Renewing research and education through advanced digitisation	10
3. Students: we invest in excellent and inspiring education.....	11
3.1 Organising more intensive and small scale education.....	12
3.2 Encouraging an engaged and proactive attitude in our students.....	13
3.3 Further enriching our teaching environment through internationalisation	14
3.4 Connecting a professional offering in Life Long Learning to our research.....	15
4. Partners: we further enhance our work through external cooperation	16
4.1 Scaling up research and education partnerships	17
4.2 Improving the support for valorisation activities	18
4.3 Strengthening links with the city and the region	19
5. Responsibility: we put our public values into practice.....	20
5.1. Building safeguards for the independence of research	21
5.2 Increasing our sustainability knowledge and living up to it ourselves	22
5.3 Increasing inclusivity and equal opportunities within the UvA.....	23
5.4 Ensuring a healthy, safe and stimulating work environment	24
6. Staff: we are a magnet for talent.....	25
6.1 Pursuing our goals and creating attractive work environments through leadership	26
6.3 Recognizing and rewarding all kinds of talents and tasks	28
7. Organisation: we are agile thanks to our process and governance design	29
7.1 Harnessing creativity through teams and entrepreneurship.....	30
7.2 Using standards for support processes	31
7.3 Reducing the gap between professional services and science	32

1. Outline: our challenges and drivers for the coming years

The main direction for the UvA in the coming years is based on the challenges we face and on the forces that drive us. We had already identified these challenges before the corona crisis. The need to address them has only increased.

Our core values

The UvA is engaged in science that aims to understand and serve the world, without being bound by political, religious or other interests. We are an ambitious, creative and public university in Amsterdam. We are both independent and engaged. We work towards a sustainable, prosperous future and stand up for justice and equal opportunities. We listen and offer the freedom to ask questions, to be curious and to debate unhindered. We do so with respect for everyone's input, background and conviction, and in an environment that is socially and intellectually safe. We shall defend these values at all times.

Our challenges in the coming decade

As a university, we are working to widen the scientific knowledge horizon of our society. We want to get the best out of ourselves and of students who will soon be tackling the issues of the world. These are the *raison d'être* of our research-intensive education, our doctoral programmes and our scientific research.

In the 2020s, we expect the following major challenges on the (international) playing field of higher education and research.

- Digitisation is a powerful driver for our ambitions - even more so than we imagined before the corona crisis. In research, smart use of digitisation transforms or enriches the methods of all disciplines. By combining and analysing data, all kinds of processes can be mapped out in innovative ways, for example as input for complex models that give grip on social issues. The use of research methods fuelled by data science requires investment in new expertise, teamwork and a state-of-the-art infrastructure.
- Digitisation is also taking off in education and examinations. Even before the corona crisis, it was already clear that ICT is challenging further innovation of the content and form of the study programmes. There is a need for a strategic framework for the digitisation of education: what is the best combination of online and face-to-face teaching? The better we are able to utilise the increased digitisation - and also new possibilities such as adaptive learning systems and learning analytics - the better our future position as a provider of higher education in and from Amsterdam.
- Controlling the workload is a complex task. Many factors play a role here. One of these is the increasing pressure of accountability and regulation. We wish to establish for a good balance between rules and professional space, and between legitimacy and efficiency. A stronger quality culture can help achieve that balance and thus curb the work pressure.
- In the Netherlands, funding of university research is hardly linked to that of education. Yet the combination and interaction of both is the essence of the university. Sustaining the balance between education and research therefore boils down to ourselves. After the growth in the previous period, further growth in student numbers is not an objective, unless it is closely linked to maintaining the resilience of our disciplines or to our research programming.
- The increasing competition in attracting, retaining and training talents is the next challenge. It is of great importance that we bring in staff and students with different talents and backgrounds, i.e. actively working on diversity, inclusiveness and equality.
- An important issue is open science: the cultural shift towards transparency and openness about research data, because this serves science better than the old, closed practice.
- Finally, there is the task of strengthening public confidence in the academy. This trust is no longer self-evident, partly because wealthy and knowledge-intensive players in the research market are putting pressure on the position of the 'university' as an institute (for example in the field of data and pharmacy).

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
----------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------------	--------------	---------------------

The university must redefine itself and continue to innovate. Based on our core values and public position, we determine how we can work together with the right coalition partners - knowledge institutes, companies and social institutions.

Our strength

The UvA is a vanguard player in the academic world. Uniquely, we possess almost the entire breadth of alpha, gamma, beta and medical sciences at top level internationally. Driven by their boundless curiosity, our scientists work with the best in the world on innovative and fundamental research. Our research and education are closely linked and inspire each other. The range of education on offer is broad and activating, and stimulates student engagement. Naturally, we want to retain the strength in the individual disciplines and study programmes. We can make better use of the high quality that we have across a wide spectrum.

Our ambitions

In order to remain broad vanguard players, scientific innovation is essential. Innovation originates in the disciplines themselves, but we can also make better use of the variety within the UvA. We want more intensive cooperation between disciplines, so that this contributes to innovation in each individual discipline. In addition, cooperation is needed to develop integrative methods and common languages for tackling complex (global) issues that do not respect disciplinary boundaries. Think of the sustainable development goals, pandemics, the consequences of advancing communication and medical techniques, artificial intelligence or genetic modification, increasing populism, nationalism and migration. With our interdisciplinary knowledge and research methods, we must be able to respond flexibly to these and future issues.

Innovation and agility in research are also reflected in our educational offering. We train students for a society characterised by increasing diversity and complexity, but also by inequality. Our students will soon take over the helm from the current generation, both in science and in other sectors. We are pleased to see that today's young people also want to lead a more just and sustainable world, and that they want their university to take the lead together with them. How can we teach students to turn ideals into reality? By giving them interdisciplinary knowledge and knowledge of data techniques, but also skills that transcend the disciplinary programme (such as effective project management or working together in a diverse context). The corona crisis is accelerating the reflection on the working methods and digital methods we use in our teaching. In education, as in our research, we want to be among the best. Broad accessibility and equal opportunities remain paramount in this respect.

We can only realise these ambitions if our organisation as a whole becomes more agile. Processes, organisation and systems must not hinder employees and students who (wish to) work beyond and across the boundaries of their discipline. Currently, anyone who has to deal with several faculties in their work or study must adapt to (too) many different procedures and habits.

In the following chapters, the institutional plan sets out what is needed to be innovative in research and education, and in the associated processes and facilities.

2. Education & research: we continue to deliver top quality across the board
3. Students: we invest in excellent and inspiring education
4. Partners: we further enhance our work through external cooperation
5. Responsibility: we put our public values into practice
6. Staff: we are a magnet for talent
7. Organisation: we are agile thanks to our process and governance design

Outline	Education & research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	---------------------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

2. Education & Research: we continue to deliver top quality across the board

Virtually all areas of UvA research occupy a prominent place internationally. In a rapidly changing world, however, what is good today may not be good enough tomorrow. That is why we continue to invest in our strong base, fundamental research in the disciplines. From there, we encourage innovation in research and education with additional resources. Finally, we are putting digitisation at the top of the agenda.

If we want to continue to participate at a high level with our broad range of research and education, a number of strategic choices are needed.

For research, we need to focus the choices we make in existing programming and investment. We must do so on the basis of two analyses: what distinguishes UvA research and which social questions do we draw inspiration from? In addition, we innovate our research through collaboration at the intersections of disciplines. To this end, we invest extra resources in four themes. Each discipline should be inspired by the themes and enriched with insights and methods from other fields of science. Our strengths in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), data science and complexity are particularly helpful in this respect. This creates a combination of depth and breadth with which we can make use of the UvA's competitive advantage, build up scientific knowledge about social issues and attract new talents.

The excellence we have built up in research must be reflected in our education. This will be an important criterion in the allocation of additional resources within the themes. Our education is research-intensive; as the disciplines renew themselves, the content of the educational programmes will change accordingly. Innovations that are relevant to each programme come from data science. We want every UvA student to (at least) become acquainted with this field.

In all this, we are going to make more powerful use of digitisation. For education, the corona crisis has accelerated the use of online forms of work, but has also shown how indispensable face-to-face learning processes are. We are doing earlier and more thoroughly what we were already planning to do, namely further innovate education with a smart combination of online and face-to-face working methods. We will go a step further and explore alternatives to the current system of lectures and seminars, with the aim of making the contact moments between lecturers and students more intense and effective.

In short, in the coming period this means:

1. focusing more strategically in our research programming
2. encouraging closer collaboration between disciplines
3. reviewing the connection of our education to research and societal questions
4. renewing research and education through advanced digitisation

2.1 Focusing more strategically in research programming

The desire to be as good tomorrow as it is today - i.e. to be a broad vanguard internationally - determines the use of the research resources available. In the 2019 Strategic Framework for Research, it was agreed to make sharper choices in this respect. To this end, two analyses are important. The first is: in what way can UvA research continue to be distinctive? The second is: how can we respond to societal challenges for which funds are available from the second and third flows of funds (from NWO, the EU, and from other public and private sources, national and international)? So we base our research strategy on a well-developed analysis of the UvA's strengths in all (sub)disciplines. This involves both our self-image and the outside view of the UvA. As a result, we know what the intellectual footprint of all our disciplines is and what their competitive advantages are.

So we start from the existing strengths. From there, we want to innovate both the subject content and methods of research. As already mentioned, one of the sources of innovation is interdisciplinary cooperation. Section 2.2 discusses this in more detail.

The Strategic Framework for Research mentions a number of other conditions needed to maintain and strengthen our leading international research position. These are addressed elsewhere in this strategic plan:

- working together in teams (see chapter 7)
- cooperation in (European) consortia (chapter 4)
- strategic cooperation with civic partners on the basis of reciprocity (chapter 4)
- good research facilities and a good digital infrastructure (chapter 7)
- open science (cooperation, transparency, reproducibility and general accessibility of scientific output, see chapter 5)

It goes without saying that we strive for the highest degree of scientific integrity and independence in our work, in line with the unabatedly relevant advice of the 2017 Scientific Integrity Working Group. We also do this in our teaching, both at Bachelor's and Master's level and at PhD level.

To do

- Make explicit the strategic position, opportunities and choices of all research institutes for the coming years (based on intellectual footprint, competitive advantage and social significance and inspiration).
- Maintain the open internal dialogue on the independence and integrity of scientific research and give it a place in education.

Outline	Education & research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	---------------------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

2.2 Encouraging closer collaboration between disciplines

In addition to sharper choices in research programming, there will be a stimulus for collaboration between disciplines. To this end, we make use of the financial room for manoeuvre in our budget (of the university and the individual faculties).

With the extra money, we invite scientists to formulate new, sometimes unexpected research questions at the interface between disciplines and faculties - and to incorporate these into education. We have selected four social themes for this purpose. The UvA has a good basis for all four:

- *responsible digital transformations*
technology and ethics of regulation, algorithms, systems and platforms; their impact on trust, dependency and equality in society
- *healthy future*
mental and physical health in relation to cultural factors, behaviour, increased participation in society and achievement of equal opportunities
- *resilience and justice in society*
participation, inclusiveness, inequality, security and resilience of society, governance and democracy in relation to cultural and technological innovations
- *sustainable prosperity*
sustainable, climate-proof progress by reducing the ecological footprint, changing behaviour and renewing materials and resources

There are, of course, issues that touch on several themes. The corona pandemic, for example, raises questions that run right through them (for example, about the relative value of health, freedom and security or about the use of digital means to contain the pandemic). Concepts such as artificial intelligence, behaviour, inequality, conflict, public domain, etc. provide common perspectives on the four themes that fit in well with current UvA research.

With the innovation impulse via these themes, we want to achieve a leverage effect:

- research cooperation should attract third party income, preferably resulting in long-term partnerships with internal and external researchers and with interested companies and philanthropists. The other resources would come, for example, from the EU, NWO, the National Growth Fund or the region;
- the innovation has an impact on the range of education on offer (initial and post-initial), as a result of which we attract new students with educational content that matches the new research questions. In this way we will continue to profile the UvA as a research-intensive top university;
- through research collaboration, we are able to attract talent from both home and abroad with an interfaculty perspective.

The financial impulse comes on top of the already existing provision for Research Priority Areas (RPAs). For each of the four themes, in principle a quarter of the additional resources will be available. We are supporting the construction of project-based research lines over a period of five to ten years. The research lines aim to attract their own funding (from the second and third flow of funds and via the education and research parameters of the allocation model). The rector consults with the Deans of the faculties involved on how and to which principal researchers the extra funds are entrusted.

To do

- Investing additional resources in fundamental innovation of research and education in cooperation between faculties.
- Binding new, young and mid-career talent to the UvA and investing in recruitment with interfaculty appointment advisory committees.
- Using the fellowship programme of the UvA Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) to give researchers the time and space to learn to master another discipline, for example by means of sabbaticals.

Outline	Education & research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	---------------------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

2.3 Reviewing the connection of our education to research and societal questions

In conjunction with research, we are reviewing our education to update it where necessary. Connecting the offer to the themes of section 2.2 is an important test, but not the only one.

We want our portfolio to remain future-oriented, distinctive and affordable. In practice, it is easier to add courses and modules than to discontinue one. Before the end of 2021, each faculty (College/School) will analyse its own educational offering, the diversity of the student population and its own 'market position'. This portfolio analysis should show how the current course offerings are in line with our research priorities and our values, as well as with questions from students and society. For example, we see that the demand for interdisciplinary programmes is increasing, as is the demand for electives to be converted into regular components (mainstreaming, for example, of subjects on sustainability, social justice, non-western perspectives or artificial intelligence). Particularly in the catalogue of minors, it should be evident that the UvA is a broad university. We want to make the minors more accessible and attractive to students from within and outside the UvA (including those from abroad). We will take this into account in our scheduling. We are exploring whether we want to profile (parts of) our education internationally through unbundling. This is the trend towards regrouping programme components in order to offer them again digitally or in combination with other (international) programmes. In particular, subjects and modules that are closely linked to our own research can lend themselves to this.

We also employ the best UvA scientists as lecturers in our bachelor's programmes; after all, our bachelors are academic and research-intensive. For the form in which we offer our education, we look for the human dimension, naturally within the available resources (chapter 3 discusses this in more detail).

In the master's phase we want to establish a better connection between education and our research priorities (including the RPAs). The innovation impulse described in 2.2 contributes to this. The alignment of the master programmes' admission criteria with the end terms of interdisciplinary bachelors also requires attention. Furthermore, according to some faculties, a one-year master's degree is too short for specialisation in a number of situations. Along with them, we are investigating possibilities of extension.

To do

- Making explicit the strategic choices behind each programme: what is the objective and target group; what are the learning objectives and honours offered; how inclusive and diverse is the programme; how does it link up with secondary education, the labour market and our research; what is the working language; what is the accessibility, studyability, teaching methods used and digitisation, work pressure and follow-up of the 2018 Institutional Quality Assurance Test?
- Examining the minors on offer (points for attention: scope of freedom of choice, international profiling).
- Experimenting with the extension of several one-year master's programmes.

Outline	Education & research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	---------------------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

2.4 Renewing research and education through advanced digitisation

During the corona crisis we saw to what extent (and how much more than five or ten years ago) numerous processes can take place digitally and remotely. Since the previous Strategic Plan, the technical possibilities of computers and information technology have once again increased enormously. As the UvA, we are generating knowledge that is in line with the digitisation of many domains in society. We do this, for example, with QuSoft, the research centre that focuses specifically on quantum software (a joint initiative of the UvA and the VU) and with ASML in the ARCnl project. We have made new and scientific questions - raised by the technical possibilities - an important spearhead. For example, in 2022 we will open the ICAI building at the Amsterdam Science Park, where we will house science, education and business applications in the AI field. We previously appointed four university professors at the intersections of AI and various other disciplines. However, that does not mean that we are done. For all disciplines, data and methods are available that bring about far-reaching innovations in research. We are setting up a 'data-science function' to help researchers acquire these skills, even if they have not grown up with them.

We also recognise the impact of digitisation on freedom and privacy, and how important it is to handle these with care. The students we educate now cannot do without (basic) knowledge of and insight into digital techniques, and must be initiated into the use of data, images and algorithms, and into the inherent ethical questions.

For the form in which we offer education, the effectiveness of learning is at the top of the digitisation agenda. The report 'Blend it & share it' from 2015 invited UvA teachers to experiment with the concept of flipping the classroom. By now it is impossible to imagine education (worldwide) without online forms of work. The new Teaching & Learning Centres have a key position in this development and proliferation in the UvA. We do not so much want to put existing education online, as really use digitisation for innovative, different forms of education, including the opportunities it offers for accessibility, internationalisation and distance learning. We are going to consider more carefully what the optimal mix of online and face-to-face offerings is. Thinking about alternatives to the current interpretation of lectures and seminars opens up opportunities to organise education on a smaller scale and to increase student involvement. Chapter 3 discusses this in more detail.

To do

- Setting up a 'data-science function' to help researchers safely carry out data-driven research.
- Including an introduction to digital methods or data science in every bachelor's programme: offer all students subjects or a minor in data science.
- Expanding IT resources for activating learning (knowledge clips, tools for feedback and self-study), for digital forms of assessment, for eliminating deficiencies and disadvantages and for new forms of learning (both distance and face-to-face).

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	-----------------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

3. Students: we invest in excellent and inspiring education

With the extra resources, portfolio analysis and powerful digitisation (see chapter 2), we keep our educational offerings up to date and relevant. In addition, there is an impulse for innovation from the demand side, i.e. from students and society as a whole. The diversity of the student population is still increasing. We want to better tailor our programmes to this diversity and to our environment. This includes giving graduates from all disciplines the opportunity to continue learning.

Our education has greatly improved in recent years: study success rates have increased, there are fewer drop-outs, the international classroom has been introduced and the range of interdisciplinary education and minors on offer has been expanded. This is a good starting point for taking the next step towards excellent education with an ambitious study culture (as included in our Vision on Teaching and Learning) in a rich learning environment that includes intercultural perspectives.

Excellent education requires good interaction between curricula, lecturers and students. First of all, interaction between lecturers and students, and between students themselves, is indispensable. We achieve more intensive contact by thoroughly thinking about forms of education: what is can and cannot be done independent of time and place, what requires face-to-face contact? Secondly, we must and intend to take more account of differences between students. We already recognised this in the Diversity Policy Document of 2019. Various measures have now been implemented, but we are not there yet. Working actively on diversity means that we no longer assume one size fits all. Students differ from one another in terms of their experiences, prior education, background characteristics, language skills (Dutch, English, other languages) and cultural knowledge and interest. The majority of them also learn and process information differently than students did ten or fifteen years ago. We embed inclusiveness (in the portfolio analysis of Chapter 2) in the learning objectives and subject content, and adapt our didactics, working methods, materials and assignments accordingly. In this way we contribute to everyone's ability to work together inside and outside the academy, to think and act off the beaten track, and to have an open attitude towards other people and groups in society. Furthermore, we include important academic skills in education that not all applicants take for granted, such as multilingualism or algorithmic thinking. At the other end of the spectrum, for students who want to stand out, we have an offer of honour programmes and various extracurricular activities.

We expect students to be seriously committed to their study programme, to their fellow students, to the academy and to their environment - near and far. We promote this involvement, partly because it gives students a greater chance of success: of successfully completing the programme with rich and meaningful learning outcomes (see also “Study Success 2.0” from 2017).

In the coming years, we will be working in line with the educational vision:

1. organising more intensive and small-scale education
2. encouraging an engaged and proactive attitude in our students
3. further enriching our teaching environment through internationalisation
4. connecting a professional offering in Life Long Learning to our research

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	-----------------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

3.1 Organising more intensive and small scale education

More intensive and small-scale education enables effective contacts between students and lecturers. A student who feels seen and heard, builds self-confidence and is committed to the programme. This becomes more important now that the differences between students are greater and more distance learning is provided. More effective contact can also prevent study delays or dropping out. UvA Matching and *proefstuderen* have only partially ensured a better match between student and study programme. Particularly in large programmes with a high drop-out rate or study delay, small scale teaching can help to increase the match and avoid anonymity.

Small-scale teaching therefore advances the quality of the learning processes. It is one of the three themes on which the UvA (in pre-pandemic times) has entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (in the Quality Agreements 2019-2024), which provides some extra resources. For the most part, the UvA has devolved these resources through the allocation model; for each faculty, an agreement has been reached with the student council on how they will be spent. After all, not every student goes through the same learning process; it is up to the faculties and study programmes to determine how they organise their education on a smaller scale and in a more student-oriented way.

Even with these extra educational resources, the budget is limited. Within the total budget (which amounts to approximately one teaching hour per ECTS achieved), we have to look for more interaction between lecturers and students. It is possible that the effective contact time may be higher with the same teaching load. More than half of the teaching time is now spent on preparation, correction and professional development, i.e. not on contact with students (where there are also considerable differences between programmes and faculties). Smart use of the corona-accelerated digitisation and a reconsideration of the current system of lectures and seminars can help in this respect. It is important that lecturers receive good educational assistance in redesigning their teaching, in which reducing the workload is also an important issue.

Given the available resources, education should be as effective as possible and give as much satisfaction as possible to students and lecturers. We do not want to make teaching cheaper, but better. A precondition for this is that education and research are equally recognised and valued equally as parts of the academic function. Chapter 6 deals with this in more detail.

To do

- Achieving a more effective balance between contact time and total teaching time.
- Exploring alternatives to the current system of taught and practical classes.
- Creating more differentiation in education for a better match between student and study programme.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	-----------------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

3.2 Encouraging an engaged and proactive attitude in our students

Excellence in education goes hand in hand with involvement and commitment: it invites students to feel co-responsible for the content of their education and to commit themselves to their own study success. In our educational vision, we expect students to invest in their education as well, both as individuals and as academics. Their involvement can be increased in:

- improvements in the curriculum
- the study associations and the academic community
- participation and management of the university or faculty
- our wider environment, through community service learning placements

The initiative to get more out of the programme than the knowledge required for the degree now lies mainly with the student. We want our students to acquire the (cognitive and social) competences in or alongside their study programme that they were not entrusted with at home. After all, we train them to take over the helm in science and society. Students are under financial pressure due to student loans; they often have a secondary job or continue to live at home. We notice that this hampers participation in non-mandatory courses and activities for many students, especially if there is no value in return (in credits or in money).

The bond between student and academic community and between alumnus and university also receive more attention. Some ten percent of students feel involved with the university as a whole (judging by the turnout rate at the Central Student Council elections). A slightly larger proportion feel involved with the programme or faculty and are, for example, active in a study association. For the Programme Committees, which deal with the improvement of curricula, there are often not enough candidates to hold an election. Greater student involvement with the UvA should also result in students remaining actively associated with the university and (especially) with their programme after their studies. It is important that our alumni keep abreast of the latest developments in research and education. Conversely, they can also make a valuable contribution to this, either from their (professional) practice or as donors.

Finally, it is good if students live in the city or close to Amsterdam. After all, this is where academic life takes place. That is why student housing remains high on the agenda of our discussions with the region in the 2020s.

To do

- Encouraging students through the curriculum to participate in academic life and research.
- Setting learning objectives to promote awareness of diverse social backgrounds, of possible inequalities of power and of processes of discrimination and exclusion.
- Including environmental activities in the curriculum's choice option, such as entrepreneurial activities or social activities with a learning component.
- Promoting the participation of students from all backgrounds in extracurricular activities.
- Increasing interaction and knowledge-sharing with alumni and the personal connection between students and alumni.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	-----------------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

3.3 Further enriching our teaching environment through internationalisation

In 2020, the proportion of foreign students at the UvA was 25%. Of this, 30 percent came from outside the European Economic Area (EEA). Of course, it remains to be seen what the (lasting) effects of the Covid-19 measures will be on these percentages. For the time being, the objectives set out in our 2017 Strategic Framework on Internationalisation apply in full. This states that we wish to increase the quality of education by making use of the international classroom, so that we can:

- prepare students for an increasingly international environment
- bring non-Dutch cultures, backgrounds and perspectives to education
- promote mutual understanding for differences in values and social views

For all these purposes it is necessary that Dutch and international students mix well with each other in daily practice, not only in the classroom, but also outside it (in times of Covid-19 this is an extra challenge).

Our student population is not only more diverse, but since the opening of English-language bachelor's programmes and tracks, it has also rapidly become more international. Compared to five years ago, there are now five times more international students in multi-year studies. So they stay in Amsterdam for quite some time. This is beneficial for the international classroom and for the Dutch labour market. The international students also provide the UvA with a network of alumni and ambassadors. All this will only come to fruition if we give these students the opportunity to gain positive experiences and get in touch with Dutch students. A warm welcome upon arrival is not enough. Programmes must clearly show which goals they are pursuing with internationalisation and how these are reflected in the final attainment levels. Whether or not a programme is internationalised is an explicit part of the portfolio analysis referred to in section 2.3. Student associations play an important role in activities that bring Dutch and foreign students into close contact with each other.

Incidentally, our internationalisation policy does not aim to attract (many) more students as a revenue model. We want to provide a good context for the students who choose our university in a global, digital educational world. We are also working with European universities in an alliance (EPICUR) that aims to form a new, multilingual generation of European citizens and increase student mobility through digital transformation of educational processes.

The UvA is bilingual (Dutch-English). We expect staff and students to have passive knowledge of both languages (at the internationally established B2 level) and active knowledge of either (at C1 level). For programmes in which only Dutch or only English is the official language, the requirement of the other language is not compulsory, but is conducive to participation in academic life.

To do

- Work with study associations to improve the mix between Dutch and international students, at the start and throughout the academic year.
- Offer a summer course Dutch for new international students.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	-----------------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

3.4 Connecting a professional offering in Life Long Learning to our research

Knowledge acquisition does not stop after obtaining a Master's degree. The policy boundary between initial (master's) education and lifelong learning will fade. Students should be able to postpone their master's degree if they want to gain work experience first. And in practice, graduates need refresher courses, further training or the latest insights in their field. The knowledge from their university course will no longer last a lifetime.

It is part of our responsibility towards society to meet those needs and thus promote innovation in society, sustainable employability and people's self-development. Like our regular education, we want to permanently connect our lifelong learning offer with our research. In this way we strengthen the research-intensive character of degree and non-degree programmes. In addition, this connection promotes the dissemination of current research results from all faculties via our alumni or via graduates from other universities.

The 'house' within which this takes shape is the UvA Academy. Under this common brand name, we offer short-term educational programmes for (working) adults, such as master classes, courses and webinars. The UvA Academy makes the most recent insights from science and practice accessible to professionals. In this way, we also contribute to Amsterdam as a hub of academic knowledge and intellectual exchange.

For the UvA, the benefit of the lifelong learning offer is that:

- we contribute (as part of our public task) to the continued employability of academics on the labour market by equipping them for major transitions that take place every couple of years.
- we promote the link between science, on the one hand, and practice and the professional field, on the other hand
- it reinforces the social relevance of our education and research
- it may lead to closer cooperation with companies and institutions for research and work placements
- it provides the faculties with additional income to support the wide range of courses on offer

To do

- Including lifelong learning in the strategic choices of each faculty's educational offering.
- Further professionalisation of the offerings with the development of the UvA Academy platform and with its own building on the Roeterseiland (catering, rooms).

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

4. Partners: we further enhance our work through external cooperation

In order to continuously renew our scientific work, we do not merely want to encourage cooperation internally. We are aware that knowledge (even fundamental knowledge) is created in interaction with others. We will expand and strengthen our external partnerships: on an international, national and local level. On the latter level - that of the city and the region - we can contribute more to improving the living environment.

Greater cooperation with external partners will help us realise the ambitions contained in chapter 1 (of which scientific innovation is at the heart). Examples of partners are applied research institutes, universities of applied sciences, intermediary organisations, the business community and public/society organisations in the Netherlands and abroad. External cooperation helps because it:

- stimulates fundamental research, for example through private investment
- feeds into our research and education with insights, data and practical issues
- helps us disseminate and put knowledge to use
- recognises the quality of our work and raise our profile
- is a means of working towards a sustainable, prosperous and just future for all

We already have a range of connections and networks in society - international, national and local – of which we can make much better use and which may be expanded. For example, we cooperate with leading foreign universities, such as those in the League of European Research Universities (LERU), and we participate in the City Deal Making Knowledge in Amsterdam. Thousands of alumni also start work or new businesses every year. Scientists launch spin-offs (commercial applications) or sit on boards and committees. We want to make it as easy as possible for researchers and employees to seek external cooperation.

In this context, we also want to pay closer attention to the link with our immediate surroundings: the city and the region. As a public institution, we are part of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, to which we contribute through the transfer of knowledge and the training of a well-qualified, assertive workforce. Conversely, the region offers us a breeding ground for education (lifelike projects, internships, community service learning) and for scientific research (inspiring ideas, living data, living labs). Furthermore, we contribute to the sustainability of the region by promoting, along with our partners, the transition from a linear to a circular society. We want to enhance the visibility of what we (can) do for the city and the wider surroundings, strengthen our urban relationships and take advantage of the opportunities that exist by the proximity of other Amsterdam knowledge institutes.

In the coming years, we are going to do three things:

1. scale up research and education partnerships
2. improve support for valorisation activities
3. strengthen links with the city and the region

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

4.1 Scaling up research and education partnerships

Impact and cooperation are increasingly important parameters in quality assessment (SEP) and science funding. They apply not only to applied research, but also to the renewal of fundamental research and of research methods linked to societal challenges and issues. As the UvA, we can take better advantage of our location and our good research and educational reputation to make a quantum leap in collaborations and partnerships. We can do this if we invest (more) in external relations and in our role in the European science system. Valorisation is one of our core tasks. Moreover, if we spend a little bit of our time on positioning and visibility in research and (regional) society, it will pay off in the future.

Many UvA collaborations take place on the basis of concrete projects. Our ambitions for the 2020s require us to invest in more long-term partnerships around research themes. Previously, such commitments led to the establishment of ARCnl, the ICAI, Sarphati Amsterdam, and for education the Amsterdam University College and various other joint programmes with the VU. We will participate in the Inequality Knowledge Centre (see 4.3). In addition, our scientists can play a stronger role in administrative partnerships in the scientific landscape, such as in the Knowledge Coalition (the coalition of umbrella organisations in science and industry). This will enable us to have a stronger influence on political decision-making in the Netherlands and Europe.

In addition, in the 2020s we will devote more resources to showing prospective students, alumni, government and society how we are inspired by societal challenges and needs. To this end, we will use both existing channels (such as the dual programmes and OPeRA, the outreach programme for schools) and new forms.

An active, outward-looking attitude is also needed when raising funds or in political and policy circles. The more visible our work and the more concrete our ambitions are, the better we are able to set up partnerships with public and private parties that can lead to more (financial) contributions from social institutions, companies and philanthropic organisations and donors.

To do

- Achieving a quantum leap in partnerships, including by releasing funds for the development of cooperation programmes.
- Appreciating participation in external committees and lobby groups as an integral part of the university's mission.
- Further professionalising fundraising in an integrated approach with external partners, partly in order to value the significance of the UvA for society.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

4.2 Improving the support for valorisation activities

Many scientists are aware that the economic impact and societal value of their research is becoming increasingly important. They see the importance of more large-scale strategic alliances and more stakeholders (from local to global scale). The UvA has now established various successful spin-offs, which may or may not have spread their wings. Nevertheless, we undoubtedly have more opportunities here than we now identify in our research and education. In the 2020s, we want to lay a more structural foundation for this. We compare successful knowledge transfer models of fellow institutions with our current support structures IXA, UvA Ventures Holding, Matrix IC, ACE and Science & Business Amsterdam Science Park.

So far, the UvA has devoted a modest budget and instruments to our third statutory task: valorisation of research. In recent years, this budget has amounted to around € 3 million (just over 1 percent of the research budget), making use of direct income and external subsidies, including the IXA Next programme, which expires in 2021. This 3 million euro meets the increased demand from UvA researchers for advice on grant applications and legal issues, as well as for assistance in setting up a business. It is not enough for the intended leap in scale of valorisation. We do not want to wait until researchers themselves see opportunities to turn their research into a business model. As a university, we also intend to look at our work from the outside and determine the social value of our research.

In addition to money, valorisation activities are best promoted with facilitation, for example with the availability of housing, (other) services and start-up capital for new businesses (such as the Amsterdam Student Investment Fund and the Proof of Concept Fund). We intensify investments in creating a fertile climate for research and innovation on our campuses. The Amsterdam Science Park, the Humanities Lab AVS (Amsterdam Venture Studio) and the Amsterdam Law Hub on the Roeterseiland campus are examples of this. We elaborate on this in the concept of the Amsterdam Research Based Campus (see also 7.1). UvA Ventures Holding focuses on innovation and spin-offs.

To do

- Substantially increasing the commitment to valorisation, using a central budget, contributions from the faculties as clients and from UvA Ventures Holding.
- Tighter organisation of knowledge transfer models through coordination between the UvA (IXA) and group companies such as UvA Ventures Holding, Matrix IC and Science & Business ASP.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

4.3 Strengthening links with the city and the region

Together, higher education and science form one of the strongest points of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. There is no other city in the Netherlands where this sector has such a strong presence, with more than 10,000 scientists and 100,000 students across the UvA, the VU, the HvA and other colleges of higher education, institutes of NWO and KNAW, SURFsara, institutions such as Sanquin and NKI-AvL, and the recently established AMS. We are going to make even better use of this.

In the city centre, we will complete the University Quarter as the focal point of the Faculty of Humanities. The aim remains to accommodate the relevant KNAW institutes as closely to this campus as possible. In this way Amsterdam will remain one of the leading European hubs for the humanities. In the Amsterdam Science Park, we are investing in an innovative space in the field of sustainability (Sustainalab). We are also collaborating with the Faculty of Technology of the HvA. We build LAB42 for information science and ICAI. We continue to invest in the Amsterdam coalition around *AI technology for people*, an initiative that focuses on opportunities and threats of artificial intelligence for the population. Through an Amsterdam coalition of knowledge institutes and the city, it has a global field of activity. As the UvA, we want to be a distinctive AI hub. We are intensifying cooperation with companies and institutions in the fields of AI for Health, AI for Business and AI for Citizens and are raising national and European funds for this purpose. In the field of quantum software, we are also collaborating in an Amsterdam initiative (with the VU and with the TU Delft) that belongs to the world's top: the QuSoft research centre.

We continue to participate in initiatives for close cooperation between science, practice and policy. One example is the Inequality Knowledge Centre, which brings together data from and about the region with scientists from various disciplines to strengthen the basis of municipal policy. Another example is the Werkplaats Onderwijsonderzoek Amsterdam (WOA), which brings together practitioners, policy makers and scientists in the field of education.

In education, too, we put the city and the region at the top of the agenda. In this way we offer students opportunities for real-life projects, internships and forms of community service learning. We stimulate the desired engaged and proactive attitude of students (see 3.2). The UvA's broader cooperation with the city will also be strengthened through the alumni office.

The region must be able to find us. Innovation Exchange Amsterdam (IXA) is now the joint front door of UvA, VU, HvA and Amsterdam UMC for companies looking to collaborate with researchers. At policy and staff level, there is still no such gateway between the UvA and the region.

To do

- Making a success of existing initiatives (University Quarter, Amsterdam Science Park, Inequality in the City Knowledge Centre) and expanding them.
- Developing cooperation around *AI technology for people* and a start-up system with Amsterdam knowledge institutes, the Amsterdam Economic Board and the City of Amsterdam.
- Increasing the accessibility of the UvA as a collaborative partner for the city and region.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

5. Responsibility: we put our public values into practice

The UvA educates people who tackle social problems and develops the knowledge with which they can do so. This is how we actively shape tomorrow's world. It is not without meaning that we call this our *raison d'être*. Part of that is that we put the public values we hold dear into practice ourselves.

Our position in science and our capital city location make what happens at the UvA visible to everyone. We want to translate insights from our research and values that we uphold into our own behaviour. In doing so, we take responsibility for a liveable, safe, equitable and sustainable environment – both close to home and further afield. And we set the example for our students, by practicing what we teach them. We mention the following values (in random order).

The first is independence of science in relation to (among other things) the interests of governments and companies. This value is under pressure in a data driven society. Digitisation offers opportunities, but also threats. We are building up knowledge about this and, together with our partners, we are conducting the public debate. For example, about too much dependence of science on commercial ICT providers or about the impact of digital technologies on privacy (see also section 2.4).

A second value we are putting into practice is sustainability. As a vanguard player, the UvA has an essential responsibility for the transition to a sustainable society. This is reflected in our research and education, as well as in our efforts to make our own ecological footprint sustainable.

The third value we stand for is inclusiveness. We actively participate in the dialogue on inequality of opportunity, social injustice and exclusion. We help to combat these phenomena, partly by exposing the mechanisms behind them. Within our own organisation, this means that we give students equal opportunities, regardless of their background, and that we have a keen eye for inclusiveness (see chapter 3). For staff, a greater mix of backgrounds is important, both when recruiting new staff and when putting teams together (see chapter 6). It increases the quality of our work.

Last but not least, we are responsible for a healthy, safe and stimulating work and study environment. Reducing work pressure and ensuring social safety are important prerequisites for this.

In short, for the next few years, this means:

1. building safeguards for the independence of research
2. increasing our sustainability knowledge and applying it ourselves
3. increasing our commitment to inclusiveness and equal opportunities
4. ensuring a healthy, safe and stimulating working environment

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

5.1. Building safeguards for the independence of research

Independence is one of the core values of science. The rapid digitisation that is taking place in international higher education and research may put this in jeopardy.

In education, for example, we are seeing the emergence of digital learning environments, plagiarism detection tools, online bibliographic databases, intensive use of tablets and laptops, social networks for scientists and digital education platforms. These are largely commercial services that put pressure on the public values on which higher education is built. In addition, our near-monopoly in the awarding of academic degrees may be jeopardised if large, wealthy market players enter the education market. The UvA sees it as its responsibility to conduct political and social discussions on these subjects, to identify risks and to outline possible solutions.

Responsible digitisation in education means that educators retain ownership of their work if they collaborate with platform and data storage companies. Their independence must always be central. In addition, we want to carefully consider how we can avoid malicious lock-in situations. After all, such situations herald a far-reaching dependence on the commercial party offering the services or equipment. In order to guarantee the independence of our education while working in digital systems of dominant (private) players, we need agreements and regulations.

The same applies to our research. Our independence must also be at the heart of further digitisation. In our public role, we help shape open science and open educational resources. This is based on the conviction that scientific research and education are publicly funded and that the results should therefore not be monopolised. In open science, we see both opportunities for strengthening the self-cleansing capacity of science and threats to its independence. We are going to implement the principles of open science in a way that is conducive to scientific progress. Here, too, attention needs to be paid to the relationship with large data-processing companies and the legal framework surrounding 'data'. In close cooperation with other universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and in Europe (LERU), we are working on the conditions for the procurement of information services, the development of alternative publication platforms and an infrastructure that guarantees the independence of research data and metadata.

To do

- Put the public values of academic education and research on the agenda and safeguard them when purchasing platform services and in cooperation with third parties, including publishers and data technology companies.
- Make research data as FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable & reusable) as possible and work towards 100% open access of academic publications.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

5.2 Increasing our sustainability knowledge and living up to it ourselves

We make the theme of sustainability an integral part of our education and research. Every student can choose from range of the courses offered by the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (which includes sustainability). Sustainability is also a factor in the portfolio analysis of all educational programmes (see section 2.3). In research, sustainability is stimulated through the four themes (see section 2.2).

The UvA has an essential responsibility for accelerating sustainable change in society. We are therefore also striving for greening and reducing our own ecological footprint. As a rule of thumb, the current impact of our footprint should be reduced by two-thirds; this rule is derived from observations about the Netherlands made by the World Footprint Network. We may need more time for this reduction than the next six years. We are going to adjust our business processes and our decision-making behaviour by increasing the appeal of the desirable choices. We can adapt our processes by e.g. reducing the consumption of (non-recycled) raw materials such as paper, packaging or disposable items, and extending the useful life of IT equipment. Changing our behaviour involves, for example, making conscious choices in matters such as catering or travel. A white paper on sustainability (which also deals with education and research) contains measures to reduce our own footprint in the coming years. For each environmental aspect, we set an ambitious but achievable pace.

According to the climate objectives of the 'Paris Agreement', our energy consumption should not exceed 70 kWh/m² per year by 2050 (compared to almost 200 kWh/m² today). We are investigating whether we can meet this standard as early as 2040. We will be 'Paris proof' if our actual energy consumption - of all equipment in the buildings - meets the target. This means that all users can and must help to achieve it. Financial incentives should make energy saving worthwhile. In addition, we accept a limited increase in our accommodation costs per square metre because of the investments required to make the building more sustainable (an increase of 2% according to the UvA's Plan for Sustainable Construction in 2020).

To do

- Implement measures listed in the white paper (for business operations, research and education).
- Reduce energy consumption in kWh/m² in the planning period by 20 percent.
- Make our work on a sustainable UvA visible on all campuses, for example by building the SustainaLab and strengthening the UvA Green Office.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

5.3 Increasing inclusivity and equal opportunities within the UvA

A strong social trend is visible to (at last) seriously tackle the mechanisms behind exclusion, social injustice and inequality of opportunities - in the world and in our own university community. We train people who are capable of doing so, research those mechanisms and uphold our core values within our own university.

Our interdisciplinary strength enables us, at the UvA, to contribute to the social dialogue on inclusiveness and equality of opportunity across the board: we can involve legal, industrial, colonial, social and psychological aspects. Inequality and divisive barriers in society are proliferating. Groups of people differ from each other, not only in socio-economic background, but also religiously, in the language they speak or in their attitude towards (for example) family liaisons, authority and government. It is our task as a university to prepare our students for this reality, but also to contribute to less inequality, fewer barriers and (at least) equal opportunities for everyone.

Within our own community we discuss inclusiveness and equality in the way that befits a scientific institute. In other words: on the basis of the quality of arguments, self-examination, knowledge of (the perspectives of) others, equality and the will to arrive at solutions that work. We recognise that we too have blind spots in the UvA, and that our university is not exempt from exclusion, discrimination and prejudice, which occur sometimes consciously, often subtly, unintentionally, or even unconsciously.

Including different points of view and making use of the differences between people benefits our scientific quality and objectivity. It requires a stable and safe working and learning environment in which everyone within the UvA can and should be able to debate at the cutting edge, but with respect and attention for all. The university is pre-eminently the place for confrontation with facts and opinions that are challenging or potentially even offensive. That is why the debate on inequality and injustice is closely linked to our policy of safeguarding and increasing social safety and resilience (see section 5.4).

To do

- Stimulate and broaden the dialogue on (in)equality and (in)justice in the university.
- Give a broad spectrum of perspectives a place in education and research, including in minors and in the curriculum of programmes whenever meaningful.
- Include awareness of bias in professionalisation programmes such as the Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO) and in leadership training.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

5.4 Ensuring a healthy, safe and stimulating work environment

The health of our staff and students is always a primary concern and certainly in times of Covid-19. The measures taken to combat the virus disables more than we had hoped the group and classroom education that is so important in academic education. It is uncertain what education, research and academic life will look like in the coming period and what this will mean for the layout of our buildings.

Apart from the corona crisis, the psychosocial strain on staff is a persistent concern. The work pressure in the UvA (and throughout the education system) has been increasing for years. Causes include:

- the creeping reduction in the average resources per course
- the increased differences in background, prior knowledge and skills among students
- the growth of obligations, both regarding education and administrations from government and the NVAO
- the workload and low success rate when applying for external research grants
- our own procedures, which at times have grown disproportionate, our culture of meetings and discussions, and the pressure to be available at all times

Extensive analyses have been made in the *Grip op werkdruk* programme. These show that work stress is a complex phenomenon that requires a combination of measures; more money for higher education is needed, but not always a solution. The causes differ between faculties, and also within faculties and service units. Work pressure is partly due to internal choices. For example, more appreciation for research output than for teaching efforts can cause stress among lecturers who predominantly have a teaching task. However, there are also factors that are not an internal choice. For example, the extent of text-orientation in a programme may have significant impact. Among support staff (obp), work pressure is augmented by the increase in external regulatory pressure and accountability demands.

The health of students and their stress and burn-out complaints will keep receiving our full attention. We will continue existing initiatives such as UvAcare and the health week. Small-scale teaching as referred to in section 3.1 is partly intended to reduce isolation and stress in education and to better take into account the differences between students.

Work pressure is not the only determinant of a healthy work and study environment. Everyone must feel physically and socially safe within the naturally competitive environment that science is. Where this is not the case, that must be brought forward without fear of harm to one's study or professional career. We take every report of an unsafe situation seriously and investigate it carefully, observing our code of conduct in which we address unacceptable behaviour without looking away from it. If a situation or behaviour of an employee or student is found to be unsafe or not in line with UvA values and rules of conduct, and someone feels unsafe as a result, appropriate action must be taken. Where there is structural unsafety, structural change is necessary. Finally, it is important that everyone can find and understand the values and rules of conduct, and the system of procedures and confidential advisers.

To do

- Including concrete, direct measures against work pressure in the faculty's strategic plans (also to prevent undesirable side-effects of location- and time-independent working).
- Giving more confidence to implementers when adopting new policy and thus reducing the internal regulatory burden.
- Taking care of the 'house of social safety' (code of conduct, complaints procedure, confidential counsellors system, training to make unsafe situations discussable), using the recommendations of the Social Safety task force.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

6. Staff: we are a magnet for talent

The UvA's capital consists of the knowledge, talents and motivation of its scientific and support staff (geared to our ambitions for education and research). In order to remain a comprehensive top university, we need to attract and empower talented people with various competencies, retain them, but also prepare to let them go. A prerequisite is an attractive working and learning environment that people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives are happy to choose.

Each UvA unit makes its own Strategic Personnel Planning in order to be able to anticipate developments in education and research and in the labour market. Together, we strive for an attractive working and learning environment in which there is a good balance between the autonomy and the responsibility an employee has.

Being a good employer means that we invest in expertise, for example in the field of digitisation, educational competences and innovation. It also means meeting the need for meaning, creating a pleasant, safe and challenging working environment, accepting that not everyone needs to be good at everything, and having an eye for a good work-life balance. Inclusiveness contributes to an attractive working environment: it gives people from different backgrounds equal opportunities and increases our collective quality through the contribution of various perspectives. We consciously work on diversity and inclusiveness, among other things by appointing more female professors and hiring more staff with different cultural backgrounds or physical abilities (see section 6.2). Being a good employer also requires a balanced appreciation of the direct and indirect tasks that contribute to education and research. As an employer, the UvA explicitly strives to manage the workload and administrative burden.

A career at the UvA has many attractive aspects. Research groups and study programmes have a relatively high degree of autonomy. All employees do work that is of social importance and is constantly evolving. However, working for the UvA also means that student numbers and project subsidies can fluctuate and that, as a result, the range of tasks of UvA staff can be subject to change. We expect employees to be flexible and adaptable. With this in mind, the UvA will continue to work on the career prospects for temporary employees - as previously agreed for teaching positions with the trade unions and the Central Works Council. An appropriate ratio between permanent and temporary employment remains an important point of attention.

We implement the HR agenda and invest in scientific and support staff:

1. pursuing our goals and creating attractive work environments through leadership
2. increasing diversity and inclusiveness in our workforce and culture
3. recognising and valuing all kinds of talents and tasks

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

6.1 Pursuing our goals and creating attractive work environments through leadership

Managers have a key position in realising the core tasks and goals of the UvA. They have the most important role in transitions. That is why we continue to invest in coaching and connective leadership. Leadership is also a lever for talent development and attractive employment. A good leader make use of entrepreneurship, diversity and collegial cooperation in teams. He or she lends employees autonomy and ownership to achieve goals, to get to grip with work pressure and personal and collective ambitions. We know that reducing work pressure is difficult and that the problems differ between faculties and departments. We expect managers to recognise the importance of effective work processes and transparent decision-making, so that the ensuing implementation does not lead to (new) discussion. We think it is important that every manager has followed a relevant leadership course and, if possible, has held relevant managerial positions or has experience in employee participation.

Incidentally, we believe that every employee should develop personal leadership skills, including those who do not have a formal leadership role. We know that academics often hold a management position for a limited number of years, and often for part of their working hours. In the services and faculty offices, too, managers usually have a position as foreman or -woman. Most UvA managers are motivated primarily by their subject matter. That is a great asset. It is therefore important to support them as much as possible in their management tasks. While managers may be responsible for substantive, financial and personnel decisions ('integral management'), they receive high-quality support from secretaries, HR consultants, business managers and other officials. Digital applications can also help to support managers in their work and realise our ambitions in the field of talent management, learning and career policy. In the coming years, the UvA will therefore develop digital tools for recruitment and selection, annual interviews and personal development.

It is an ongoing challenge to make a leadership role so attractive (in both appreciation and support) that it can be professionally fulfilled on a part-time basis.

To do

- Integrating leadership development into strategic personnel planning.
- Structuring the support and relief of managers, through proper coordination of tasks, powers and responsibilities.
- Drawing up and disseminating UvA principles of leadership.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	--------------	--------------

6.2 Increasing diversity and inclusiveness in our workforce and culture

Section 5.3 showed how we want to contribute to inclusiveness and equality of opportunity inside and outside the UvA: by training people, conducting research and conducting the debate on these issues with due respect. Of course, our diversity policy also extends to our personnel policies. Differences between people enrich our academic environment with a broad spectrum of perspectives (not only Anglo-Saxon) and reduce inequalities of opportunity.

The Diversity Policy Document of 2019 states:

“If we wish to optimise students’ academic development and further the course of science as a whole, we believe it is vital to facilitate communication and knowledge sharing within an inclusive environment that is geared towards everybody’s welfare and embraces interpersonal differences instead of avoiding them. It is the university’s job to prepare our students to play leading roles in the dynamic and ever-changing society of the future and to blaze a trail at the forefront of this change. This requires a more pro-active strategy than simply addressing how to manage the increasing levels of diversity among our student body and staff.”

On our way to a more diverse UvA, we mainly want to attract (or retain) staff from different backgrounds. It is important that students get to know a diverse staff. Recruitment of new staff is aimed at ensuring that the UvA reflects the future. The appointment of more female professors and UHDs is a prominent goal. The recruitment of more staff with different socio-cultural backgrounds, as well as more staff with different physical abilities, is no less prominent. The trick is to translate these goals into appropriate selection criteria, combined with, of course, the professional job requirements.

Moreover, we want lecturers and other staff members to have a keen eye for what is self-evident for our students: familiarity with digitisation, but also to diversity and intercultural skills. Our young talents and their platforms (such as Jong UvA, Amsterdam Young Academy and the PhD Council) can play an important role in this respect. Ultimately, it is important that every UvA staff member is attentive to the background of the students - in such a way that all students feel seen.

We therefore consciously and actively work on diversity and inclusiveness, but these are not matters that are simply dealt with in management plans or by managers. An inclusive population of staff - and students - from different backgrounds requires a change in culture and the corresponding behaviour within the UvA. Inclusiveness is more than an individual and moral issue. We need the conviction, commitment and sensitivity of everyone in our community to prepare ourselves and our students for participation in a diverse world.

To do

- Increase the diversity of the staff and include this aspect in the strategic personnel plans.
- Translate the promotion of diversity into the criteria and channels of recruitment and selection.

6.3 Recognizing and rewarding all kinds of talents and tasks

In academic culture, scientists are valued and assessed primarily on the basis of the output of their research work. We want to change that. Within the UvA, we want to recognise and value work in other areas - education, social impact, acquisition and contributions to team and organisation - just as much as we do research. With us, a career in the 'u-line' (university lecturer, associate professor, professor) is only possible in principle for those who have, or have had, both research and teaching experience. The relationship between these is not cast in concrete. It may vary over the career stages and is established in mutual consultation. We develop a specific (career) policies for the ranks of lecturer and tutor. In other positions as well, both scientific and supporting, a discussion between the employee and the organisation on career development and sustainable employability is also necessary. For example, it can be beneficial to cooperation within the UvA if employees in key positions change positions on a regular basis.

In view of the breadth and agility that we want for the UvA (see chapter 1), we generally apply an extended selection committee when recruiting staff from scale 11, the level of university lecturer. This is certainly the case when it comes to management positions. At least one colleague from another discipline is asked to sit on the committee (several colleagues from other disciplines is also possible). As far as obp is concerned, we involve a colleague (or several colleagues) from another faculty or department. The aim is (partly) to increase the diversity of competencies and backgrounds in the composition of the team. An additional advantage is that we use this to make career decisions more objective by not keeping them within the circle of stakeholders.

Important is how we position the UvA as an attractive employer. For our innovation, we also need to attract new talent. We develop an employee value proposition (EVP), or in other words: we actively seek out talents and make them a serious offer. In this, the quality and reputation of the UvA as a leading university is paramount, but other elements also play a role. Think of the personal development space we offer, the location in or near Amsterdam and the perspectives and careers of partner and family. We can make better use of the scope for customisation in the terms of employment package we offer than we do now in order to meet the wishes of new employees. Scarcity of talent manifests itself particularly in areas where we are in direct competition with the business community: IT and artificial intelligence, law and economics.

To do

- Developing a balanced appreciation and recognition of work for all parts of the scientific company: education, research, social impact, valorisation, management tasks, teamwork and organisation.
- Wherever possible, have someone from another discipline or faculty/service sit on the application committee for appointments and job changes from scale 11 onwards.
- Make our (job) offer more competitive for talents.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

7. Organisation: we are agile thanks to our process and governance design

If we are to achieve our ambitions, we must be able to adapt our broad palette of research and education quickly and repeatedly. As an academic environment, the UvA must challenge staff and students to get the best out of themselves and to look beyond the boundaries of their own discipline. This is only possible if our organisation is flexible in processes of change and agile in day-to-day matters.

This requires a degree of flexibility and team spirit that is often found in each of us, but is not easily harnessed by the complex and pyramid-shaped professional organization of the UvA as a whole. Certainly in the educational domain, agility in business operations is a challenge, due to quality requirements, digitisation and changing student populations. In the coming years, we want to stimulate teamwork and entrepreneurship for research and education within the UvA.

Professional operational management makes collaboration and entrepreneurship easier for end users (students, lecturers, researchers, partners, board members). The challenge in business operations is to use the available resources and find the balance between responding flexibly to opportunities on the one hand and efficiently implementing standardised processes on the other. The trick is to use standards ('ISO standards') with which research groups and study programmes retain their autonomy, while still being able to carry out their activities anywhere within the UvA. Only if there are good reasons to do so, may staff and students be subject to faculty-specific procedures and habits.

Internal mobility and the sustainable employability of staff contribute to the creation and organisation of standardised processes. We want to encourage both. Employees who change to other positions within the UvA are most directly confronted with different procedures and habits; they can help to identify and tackle bottlenecks. Together with the new Social Charter, job rotation contributes to the organisation's agility. In addition, it prevents formal reorganisations wherever possible.

The agile academic system we hope to create requires:

1. harnessing creativity through teams and entrepreneurship
2. using standards for support processes
3. reducing the gap between professional services and science

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

7.1 Harnessing creativity through teams and entrepreneurship

Individual employees possess a lot of creativity that helps us to see and seize opportunities in education and research. Room for creativity, and the feeling that such room exists, is therefore of great importance. This requires trust, interconnectedness and room to take risks (responsibly). At the same time, we want to achieve common goals. For a good balance between the two, we want to move towards more programmatic and 'fluid' forms of work in teams, and towards co-creation between scientists and business professionals. We focus on what has to be achieved, less on how it has to be achieved. This requires an entrepreneurial spirit and also clarity, namely about what has been established (legislation and regulations, finances, quality system) and about how much room there is for professional autonomy. Clarity can help to reduce the regulatory burden and allow employees to exert more ownership over of the primary process.

Also helpful in improving the organisation is the notion that not everyone needs to be good at everything. We work in teams that are more than the sum of their parts. It helps if we are proud of both our own performance and that of others. When we realise that science cannot flourish without good management. When we not only employ fluid forms of work, but also enable periodic changes in individual roles within and outside teams. We are jointly responsible for the courses offered, the research contracts and programmes entered into, and for the care for our patients and clients - not each for his or her own piece of work.

Investing in teams requires a lot from managers. They have to be able to inspire, guide and motivate a group of people. Managers need to give confidence, enable team members to use their different talents and collectively evaluate collective performance. This habit requires team members to choose a position and put themselves forward, based on a sense of collective responsibility for their work and the trust placed in them.

We will become a better, more agile organisation if we embrace a culture that values entrepreneurship and experimentation and allows time to be spent on it (as well). Mistakes are allowed - because we can learn from them. Entrepreneurship is an outside in principle: employees are given the space to respond to a perceived need or opportunity in the outside world and account for the result. This is different from carrying out an assignment from 'above' and being accountable for the process. As an organisation we work towards an open climate in which this can be done safely, and of course under clear conditions.

This requires a different mindset. In formal organisations, new initiatives often end up at the back of the queue for facilities and housing, while we actually want to embrace them and pull them forward. In order to promote internal entrepreneurship, we need to be aware of this.

To do

- Investing in tools for project-based work (for managers and employees) and in familiarity with flexible forms of work.
- Promoting internal entrepreneurship and valuing teamwork by including it in the HR policy and instruments.
- Further develop the 'Amsterdam Research Based Campus' concept, i.e. linking innovation to housing strategy. This can be done by analogy with the Amsterdam Science Park, where scientists, students, companies and social partners are brought together in one location and can easily find each other.

7.2 Using standards for support processes

We can only make use of the variety within the UvA and work well together across unit boundaries (and even across the boundaries of Amsterdam institutions) if 'systems' are designed to be so flexible that they help people, rather than hinder them. Digital examinations are an example of this, or the way in which costs are settled for lecturers in interdisciplinary courses. The importance of breaking down barriers to collaboration in governance models and administrations is evident in educational collaborations within the UvA, but also, for example, in our joint degrees with the VU and in the merger of AMC and VUmc into Amsterdam UMC.

The importance of education and research is the starting point. In the coming years we must continue to work on effective standards and definitions ('ISO standards') for our process chains, and on cooperation between the departments and between the departments and faculties. Not everyone needs to do exactly the same, but we will eliminate differences in operational management that have grown historically between faculties and programmes if they hamper our agility and decisiveness. We already do this, for example, in the Educational Logistics (Onderwijslogistiek) programme.

We supplement the UvA management model with a mechanism to determine which standards must be respected in any case if there are differences between existing practices. We will also monitor the coherence between all choices. The executive committee (BVO, consisting of the directors of business operations of faculties and services) will have a stronger role in this. As a 'cooperative' of users, the BVO is already an important body in the organisation of the processes in the business operations. This will continue to be the case, but we will strengthen this role, while decisions on desired standards will be prepared by an advisory board on substantive standards.

To do

- Establish standards for UvA operations. In doing so, watch out for differences of which we think 'that's just the way it is at the UvA'.
- Strengthen the role of the BVO in the management model as a place of cooperation between the faculties and with the services.
- Setting up a UvA Standards Board (USB) to provide authoritative advice on (administrative) standards and definitions in business processes, which also facilitates external cooperation.

Outline	Education & Research	Students	Partners	Responsibility	Staff	Organisation
---------	----------------------	----------	----------	----------------	-------	--------------

7.3 Reducing the gap between professional services and science

Top-quality research not only needs the flexible business processes described above, but also professional service providers who develop, manage and innovate the processes. This concerns both people working in education and research (such as student advisors, laboratory staff, library staff or business developers) and those working in general services (such as ICT, administration, secretariats, facilities). They too work for education, research and valorisation. The ambition is that we are all sincerely proud of their work ('at the UvA things are generally well organised' - even if something goes wrong sometimes). If things go well, the support staff is even doubly proud, namely of the professional quality of their own work and of the academic quality and reputation of the UvA at large. To this end, we pursue two goals: well-considered standards and quality awareness in the process chains (as described in section 7.2) and, at the same time, a shorter distance between operational management to the primary process. The latter can be achieved by, among other things, better linking the work of the services to the faculty's operational management and vice versa.

For each of the four service centres working jointly for UvA and HvA, an implementation plan was drawn up in 2017 - upon dissolution of the administrative merger - in order to maintain cooperation and reap economies of scale. This concerns, for example, higher quality, sustainability and/or lower costs per unit of 'product'. After realisation of these plans, we will continue to work on successful joint services.

The demand for and supply of the 'products' of the services come together in the service level agreements (SLAs) that the faculties and the services reach periodically. The service centre generally has a very good picture of the quality and cost of the product and also a professional judgement regarding possible improvements or savings. However, it is important to better organise the demand side. This will provide a better idea of both the expertise and wishes of the users in the improvement of business operations and the improvement of products.

To do

- Developing a vision on the value of business operations for end users and the primary process, and on the division of tasks between central services and faculty management.
- Drawing up a new implementation plan for the joint services UvA-HvA (after the relocation of 2021) for the rest of the planning period.
- Completion of the renewal and professionalisation of the SLA cycle in 2022.