Building a stronger future for internationalisation: from reflection to action

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Who I am

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- RESOURCES
- NEWS
- CONTACT US

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2011-2021: Ten years of CHEI

This year we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation (CHEI) at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. Since activities began in 2011, we have pursued our aims as set out in

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News

We are all caught in the same storm

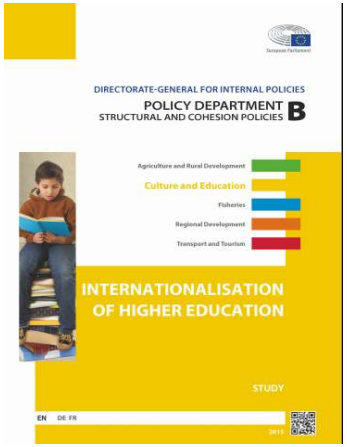
- Disruption of normal activities
- Emergency response and crisis management
- Online learning from marginal to mainstream activity
- Challenges and opportunities

New activities, actors and interactions

- Shift away from physical mobility towards internationalisation of the curriculum, virtualisation and new understandings of mobility
- Changing nature of international partnerships
- Shift away from the International Office only to a wider pool of institutional actors and agendas
- New institutional collaborations
- Opportunities and challenges for the future

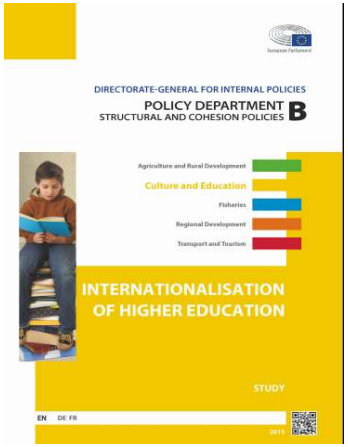
What do we mean by internationalisation of higher education?

"the **intentional** process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, **in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society.**" (de Wit, Hunter, Egron-Polak and Howard, 2015)



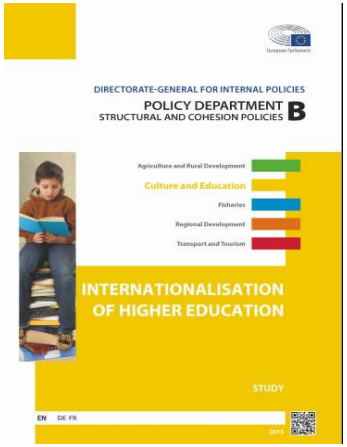
Enhancing quality for all

- Mobility has been the main focus of internationalisation and accessible to only a few students
- Integrate an international dimension to the student experience via the curriculum
- Mobility as an integral part of the curriculum
- Global learning for all students in all programmes
- In any language



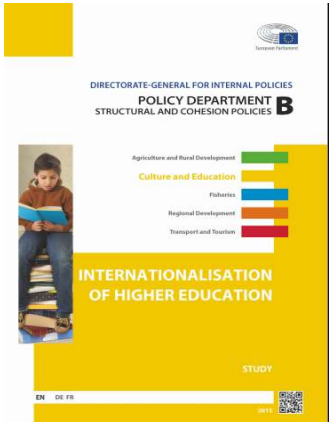
Virtual exchange – a new opportunity

- Combining technology with international/intercultural learning
- Bring together students and teachers from different backgrounds to learn from one another
- New or deeper international partnerships
- New or deeper institutional interactions
- Internationalisation for all



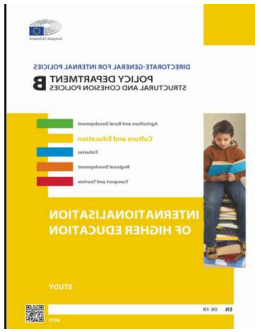
Contributing to society

- Importance of international research collaboration
- Seriousness of global climate crisis
- Commitment to Sustainable Development Goals
- Need for more equitable, sustainable and peaceful world
- Internationalisation as a global common good through knowledge creation, circulation of talent, promotion of intercultural understanding and respect
- Link to other agendas: sustainability, employability, enterprise, equality, diversity, inclusion



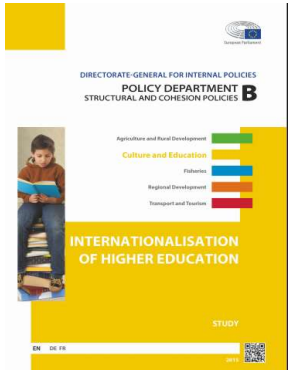
Purpose of internationalisation

- Improve the quality of education and research and be of service to society
- Shape the minds of future generations
- Make them more aware of the world in which they live
- More able to tackle the problems they face and
- More willing to engage with different cultures to do so.
- Successful internationalisation is critically dependent on the active engagement of all students and staff.



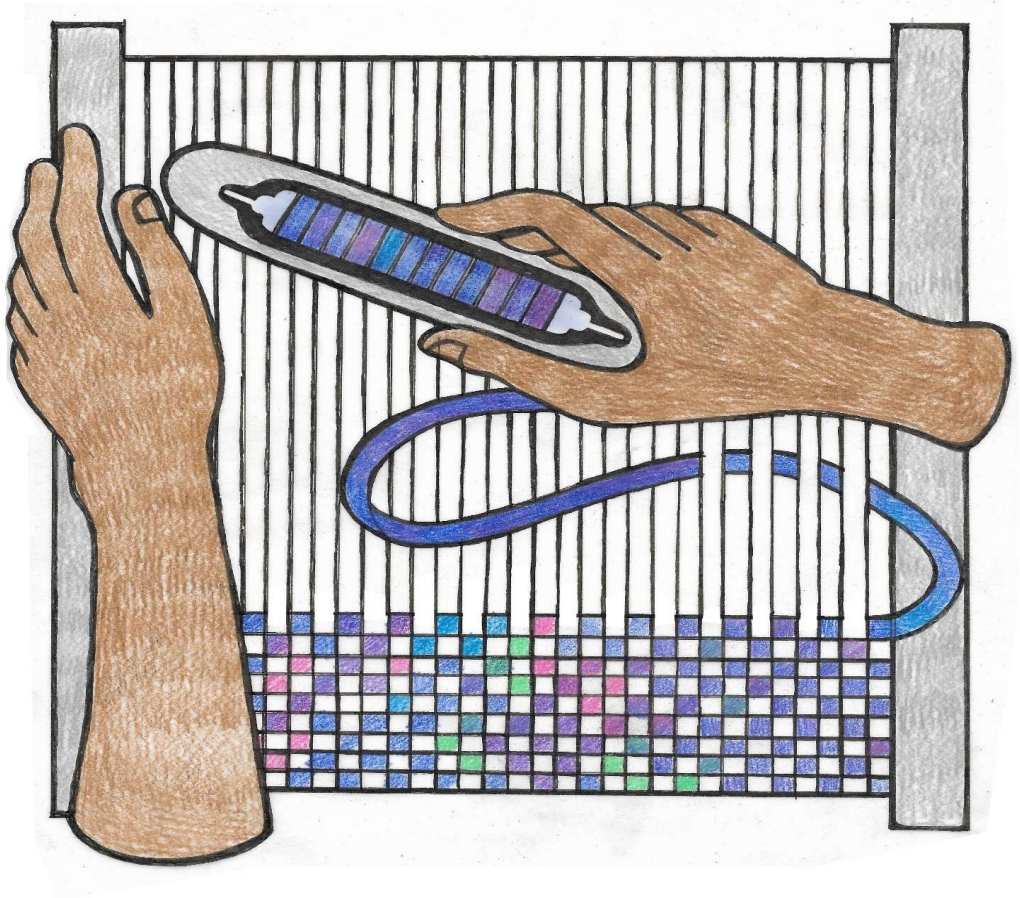
An intentional process

- Every university exists to make a difference and internationalisation should support the institutional mission and vision.
- Many seek to internationalise their university focussing principally on *what* they want to do and *how* they will do it.
- They forget to ask the fundamental question of *why* they are internationalising.
- Often leads to a collection of fragmented activities with no overarching purpose, shared understanding or way forward.
- Intentional: planned process about the future direction
- Pandemic has accelerated this understanding



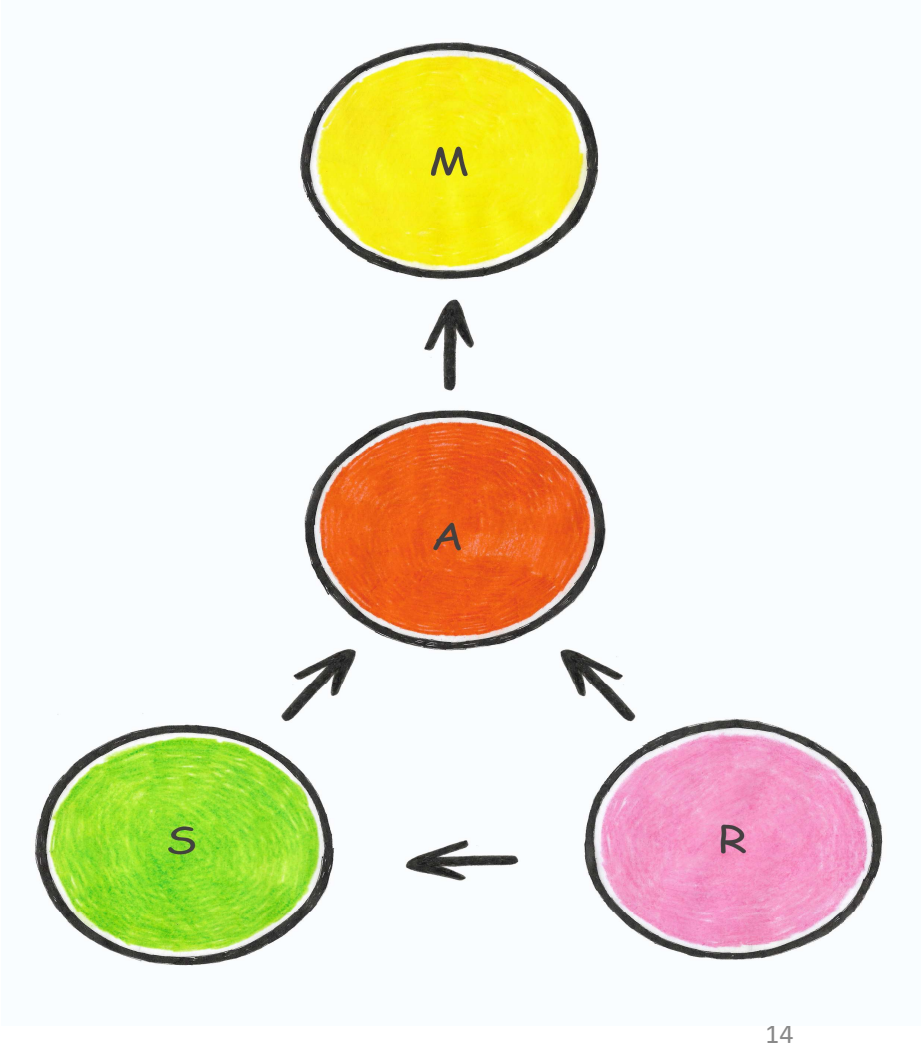
Weaving internationalisation into everyday practice

- Not a privilege for the few
- Not the exclusive responsibility of the International Office
- But a process that is transversal and integrated
- Accessible to all



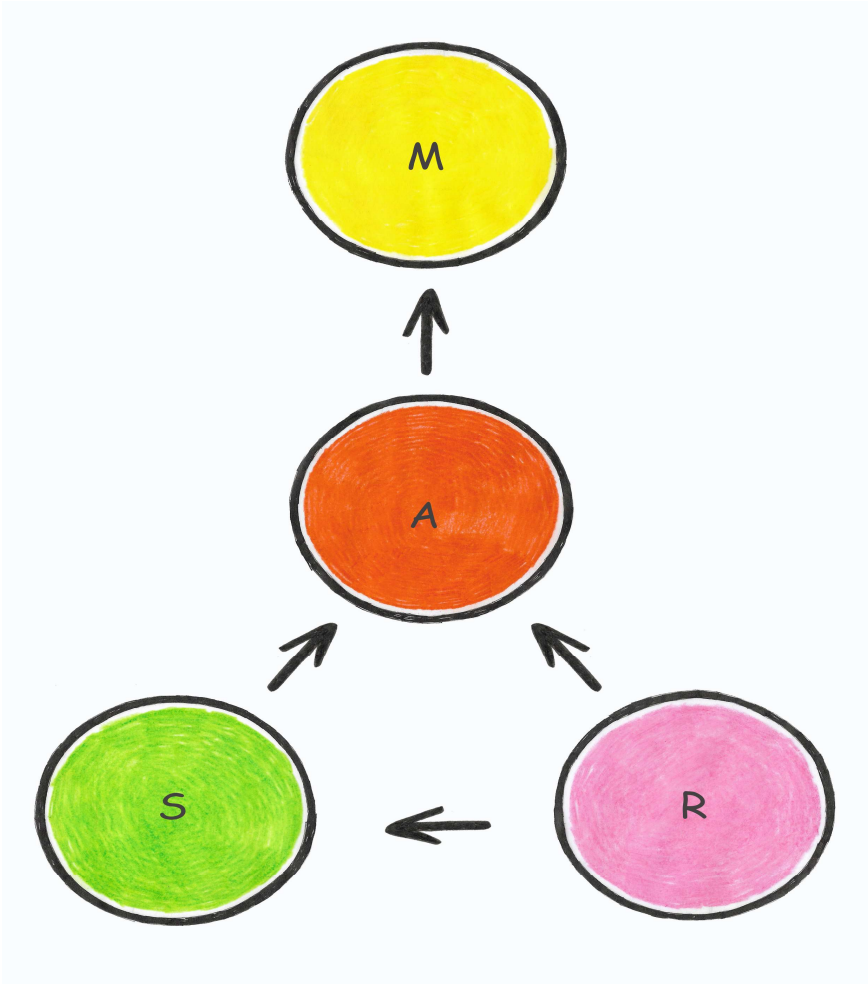
Mars model

- Structure of higher education institutions
- Reflection on how HEIs operate and how our work contributes
- Model shows hierarchy of priorities but also interconnections



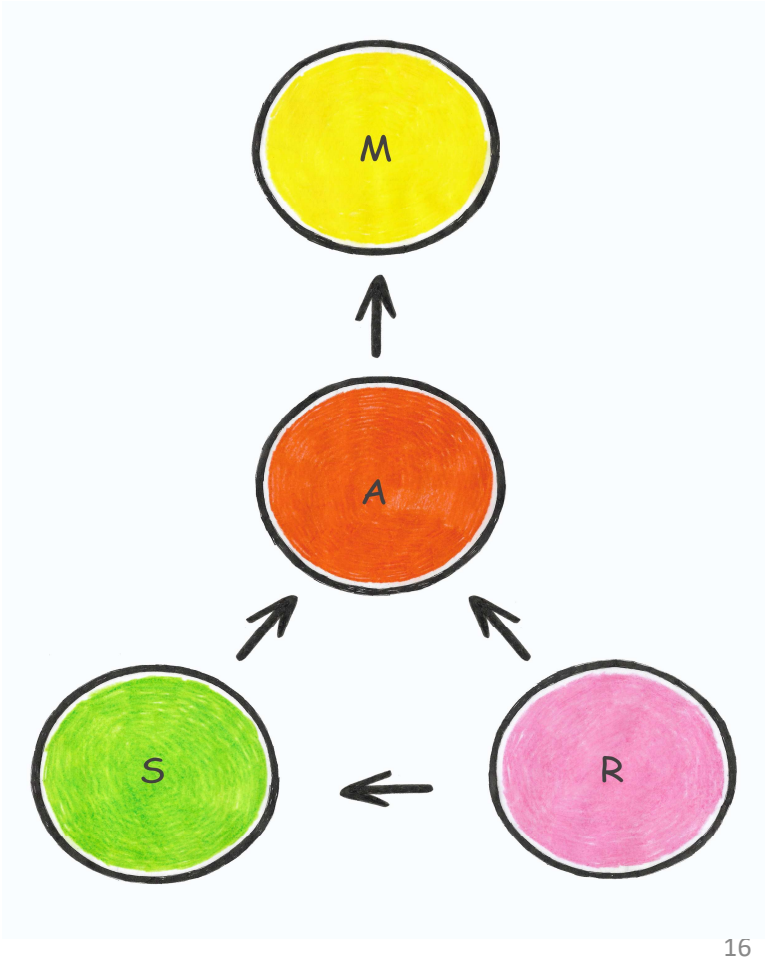
MARS model

- **M**ission and Vision – purpose of institution
- **A**cademic activities – principal means to deliver purpose
- **S**upport services support academic activities
- **R**esource management for academic activities and support services



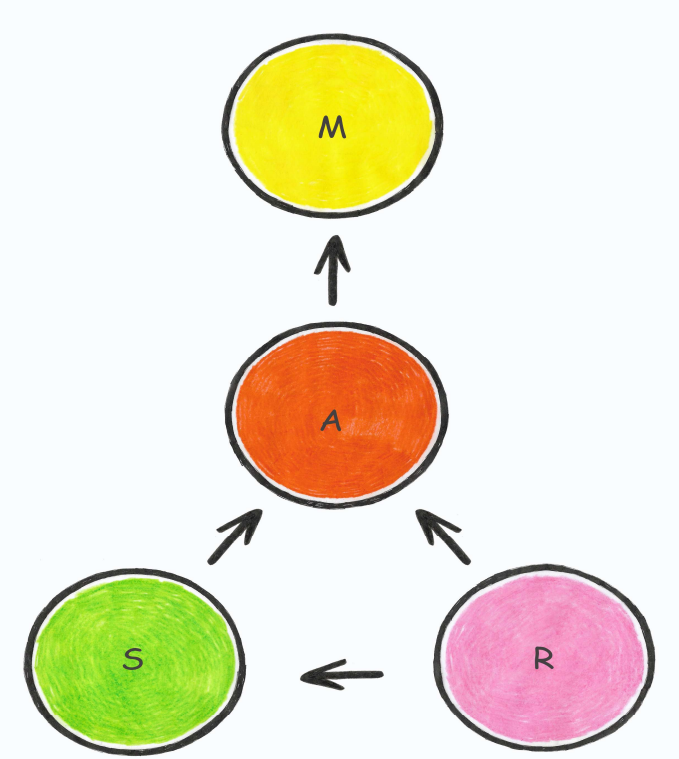
Implications for internationalisation

- Transversal
- Internationalisation objectives developed and monitored by senior management (M)
- Pursued through academic policies and activities (A)
- In partnership with support (S) and resource management staff (R)
- IO as key partner in support and facilitation



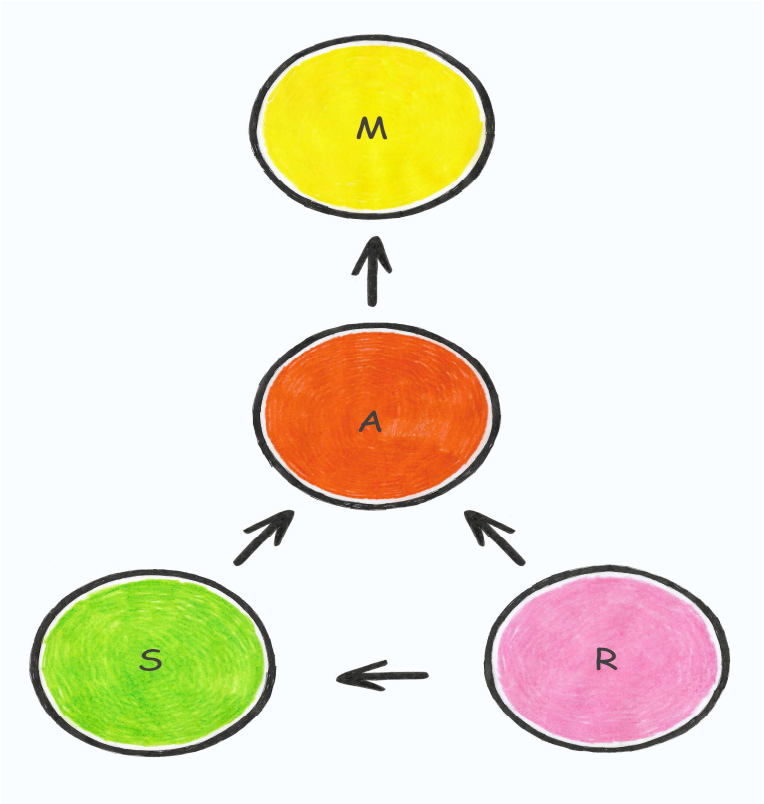
Reviewing current practice for future direction

- What is the international dimension of our institutional mission, vision and values? **(M)**
- How can we develop internationalisation activities in teaching and learning, research and external engagement that support our mission, vision and values? **(A)**
- What mechanisms and structures can we put in place to ensure that internationalisation is a transversal, and not an isolated, function? **(S)**
- How can we ensure our academic and support staff are able to deliver our internationalisation activities? Do we have the right resources in place? **(R)**



From reflection to action

- Identify the tasks to do today in order to achieve our objectives tomorrow.
- Collaborative, connected, inclusive, virtual.
- What do these words mean for you now in the light of the current experience?
- How to convert into actions?



In conclusion

- Pandemic has changed rationale for internationalisation
- Accelerated need for **more inclusive approach via the curriculum and technology** even when physical mobility returns
- **Stronger links to other global agendas**: sustainable development, climate change, equitable world
- **Deeper international collaborations**
- **Transversal approach** with wider range of institutional activities and actors

Vision
Mission

Illustrations from the book:

An illustrated guide to managing higher education institutions: for new institutions and new leaders

Dr Fiona Hunter and Dr Neil Sparnon (2021)