

Internationalization Document VIP

This document means to provide a detailed overview of the internationalization process within VIP, study association Psychology, in order to achieve our internationalization goals. Part one gives an overview of the steps that the association needs to take in order to establish the basic conditions of an internationalized association. Part two highlights the tasks of the Commissioner of Internationalization and discusses the need of a separate board member being responsible for internationalization. Part three consists out of the internationalization policy plan for the year 2017-2018 as established by the board 2017-2018. Further parts may be added if considered necessary.

The goals of internationalization as agreed on by the board of 2017-2018 are the following:

1. International and Dutch students have equal opportunities within the association as far as the conditions outside the association allow for it
2. The level of knowledge about the association is similar for international and Dutch students
3. International and Dutch students feel equally welcome and appreciated by the association and its members
4. There clearly is interaction between the groups of international and Dutch students within the association, and both international and Dutch students equally feel part of the community within VIP

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Part 1 - Basic steps of the association

An overview of different stages in order to establish the basis of internationalization

This document is based on the internationalization plan for associations provided by the FVOG and is adapted with regard to this association. The document provides an overview of the steps that have been taken so far and presents the necessary steps that still have to happen in the near future in order to make VIP an association that provides equal opportunities to both international and Dutch students. Please note that these stages focus on what is possible within the association to guarantee equal opportunities, but there are factors outside of the association that we cannot control for. This refers to the fact that we are an association in the Netherlands and that contact with external parties cannot always take place in English, therefore restricting internationals within the possibilities we can offer as an association. The order of the stages in this document is based on the order in which the steps have taken place in this association. This means that this document does not serve as a plan how things should be done and what should be done when. It rather looks at what has happened so far and puts it in a logical order and comes up with recommendations of steps that could logically follow up on the previous steps.

Communication:

Stage one:

- Information emails to the members are sent in English and in Dutch. This includes mails from the board such as the monthly newsletter as well as mails sent to members by committees such as information emails about activities
- A bilingual website is provided
- Posts on social media are written bilingually

Stage two:

- Information emails to the members are written in English only.
- The website is provided in English only
- Social media posts are written in English only

Within the aspect of communication, nearly all the different steps of stage one and two have happened within VIP. The only thing that still needs to be done is providing an English website only.

Official Documents

Stage one

- A professional English translation of the association's statutes is available for the members
- A professional English translation of the association's Internal Regulations is available for the members
- An English translation of the current policy plan is made available to the members

Stage two

- Having the Internal Regulations binding in English
- The policy plan is written in English only

Within the aspect of official documents, we expect VIP to complete stage one in the academic year 2017-2018. Regarding stage two of the Internal Regulations, having the IR binding in English is a step that should only be taken with regard to the number of internationals that are present within the association. It may not be necessary to have a binding English Regulation at all, but only a translation, so this is something that we only see happening in the future if it is to happen at all. Making the internal regulations binding in English also requires the consent of the GMM. There is no stage two for the statutes as it is not possible to have a binding translation of the statutes. The translation of the statutes will never have legal power in the case of conflict with the Dutch version of the statutes because the Dutch law only allows Dutch statutes.

General Members Meeting

Stage one

- Internationals are allowed to speak English at the GMM
- Organizing an English GMM before the main GMM, which allows international students to bring forth issues and the like just as Dutch students can in the main GMM
- Having the GMM slides in English

Stage two

- The GMM is organized and held in English

Regarding the GMM, VIP has stayed in stage one for the past years and is currently entering stage 2 with having its first GMM in English on November 28, 2017. Since this is a major step, Dutch students are still allowed to react in Dutch. The reaction will then be summarized in English in order for internationals to follow the conversation

Events

Stage one

- Some events are organized in English
- The events are promoted bilingually

Stage two

- All events are promoted and organized in English. Exceptions for Dutch events such as Dutch daytrips can be made if this is considered reasonable by the board

Regarding its events, VIP has achieved stage two this year.

Internal organs

Stage one

- Some English committees are established
- Internationals can join Dutch committees if the committee agrees with it

Stage two

- Internationals who understand Dutch can apply for board positions.

Stage three

- All committees have English as a main language and have English committee names. Consequently, internationals are welcome in each committee in every position
- An internationalization position in the board has been established in order to keep track of the process of internationalization and to represent internationals within the board

Stage four

- All committee documents that are important to be read by committee members in the present or in the near future are written in/translated to English
- All documents that are important to be read by the members as well as documents that are needed in order to make it possible for internationals who have little command of the Dutch language to apply for board positions are written in/ translated to English
- Internationals, who do not or barely speak Dutch, can apply for board positions where the conditions outside of the association allow for it.

Stage five

- All documents where the external conditions allow for it are written in English regardless of whether it needs to be read by an international in the foreseeable future

Regarding the point of internal organs, VIP has completed the first three stages by now and stage four is expected to be completed in the near future. Regarding stage five, this step does not seem necessary at the point where we are right now but it is something that can be thought about in the future.

Part 2 – Function & Tasks Commissioner of Internationalization

This part describes the tasks of the Commissioner of Internationalization (COI) and highlights why there is currently a separate board member responsible to fulfill this function. The Commissioner of Internationalization has internal as well as external tasks and also represents an international opinion within the board. Having a separate board member being responsible for internationalization is meant to be a temporary solution, as the main responsibility of the COI as he exists now is to provide a stable basis of internationalization in order to achieve the internationalization goals. Once that basis is established, the remaining tasks of the COI can be taken over by other board members such as the board member of internal affairs or the board member of external affairs.

In order to provide a stable basis for internationalization where the boards of the coming years can build up on and continue with the process, a separate board member is recommended in the beginning of the internationalization process for the following reasons:

- Monitoring and evaluating the status of internationalization is a big part of the task of the COI. In the beginning of the internationalization process, this task will take more effort since the focus of the monitoring/evaluating lies on the question how the association needs to change in order to achieve the internationalization goals, whereas in the future, the focus of the monitoring/ evaluating will rather shift towards whether the association *stays on track* in order to achieve the internationalization goals
- As indicated in the first point, it needs to be assessed which steps are needed to be taken in order to achieve the internationalization goals. This means that there is the need for an internationalization plan which needs to be established by the COI in collaboration with the board
- As mentioned above, the current focus of evaluating the status of internationalization lies on investigating how the association needs to change in order move closer towards the internationalization goals. This implies that there are things that need to be implemented or changed, and these aspects will be more in the beginning of the process
- Not only are there are more steps necessary in the beginning that need to be changed in order to move closer towards the goal, but also, once a step is established, it only needs to be continued which takes less effort than establishing it (e.g promotion/ information measures for internationals). Therefore, several steps that may take effort to establish now can be easily continued by a board member of a different function in the future

The following describes in more detail the tasks of the Commissioner of Internationalization and highlights tasks that need to be carried out in general to keep track of the internationalization process and to move closer towards the internationalization goals as stated in the beginning of this document. Please note that even though the tasks are stated as the tasks of the COI, this document does not assign responsibility to carry out these tasks to a specific board member, since the function and the tasks of the COI may be taken over by different board members in the future.

1 Establishing the basic conditions

The COI is responsible to make sure that the steps mentioned in part 1 of this document are carried out and to keep an overview of where the association stands with regard to the steps mentioned in part 1.

2 Monitoring the current status of internationalization

The Commissioner of Internationalization (COI) is responsible to keep track of the current quantitative and qualitative status of internationalization by taking into account the association in general as well as specific activities.

Quantitative part: The quantitative part includes the percentage of internationals active in the association as well as the amount of internationals within the association in general. Furthermore, the quantitative part also means that the COI shall keep track of the amount of internationals on other occasions where it is considered necessary, such as participation in certain activities or applications for committees. The COI is also responsible to put the numbers found in the association in relation with the numbers found within the study program.

Qualitative part: The COI is to monitor the qualitative status of internationalization. This means the monitoring of the amount of interaction between Dutch and internationals as well as the amount to which both groups have similar perceptions in terms of feeling appreciated/welcome by the association and its members and of feeling part of the community.

3 Evaluation and reflection

After monitoring, the COI is responsible to evaluate the status of internationalization. It has to be evaluated whether the data reflects that the association is moving closer towards its internationalization goals. Furthermore, the COI will reflect on which of the current practices may contribute to the status of internationalization, both positive and negative practices need to be taken into account. The COI consequently also thinks about aspects that may need to change in order to stay on track with the internationalization goals.

4 Internationalization policy plan

The COI also has to establish a policy plan with factors that he/she wants to focus on in order to move closer towards the internationalization goals of the association. It is important to make the distinction between the policy plan and part one of this document. Part one of the internationalization document serves as a guideline in order to establish the basic conditions

of an international association. However, it is important to note that this is only one step on the way of achieving our goals. In order to achieve our internationalization goals, we also have to take care of changing the spirit of the association into an international one, and for that, a lot of small changes are necessary. The COI is responsible to write an internationalization policy plan where he/she mentions the points he/she considers crucial to focus on within the upcoming year in order to move closer towards the internationalization goals. The internationalization policy plan does not include concrete steps but rather indicates the general focus points of internationalization for the upcoming year. The plan can either be a separate plan on its own or be included in the policy plan for the upcoming year that is written by the board.

5 Long-term Plan

As mentioned above, in order to achieve the internationalization goals, not only a yearly plan shall be written but also a long-term plan needs to be established, which includes important factors that have to be taken into account in the future. Once a long-term plan is established it is the task of the COI to keep track of the plan and to adapt it where necessary. There should be a new long-term plan at least every five years as long as the internationalization goals are not fulfilled yet.

6 Commissioner of the Integration Committee

The COI is also the Commissioner of the Integration committee. It is optional for the COI to take over the role of being the Commissioner of another committee.

7 Promotion and Information for Internationals

Internationals do not have the same background knowledge about associations as Dutch students do. The COI is responsible provide information to internationals to help them understand the concept of a study association and to promote the association to internationals in the best possible way.

8 External affairs

It is important to stay in contact with external parties in order to share experiences, keep track of each other's activities and keep the option for possible cooperation. It is the responsibility of the COI to actively build up and sustain a good network with possible cooperation partners. Also, it is the responsibility of the COI to attend meetings that involve internationalisation and to represent the position of VIP and its members.

Faculty wide: Within the faculty, the COI takes place in the internationalization working group where he/she represents VIP's opinion, builds connections with other members of the faculty and tries to find ways for cooperation with other parties of the faculty. Furthermore, the COI is responsible for coordinating the cooperation between VIP and the buddy project from the side of the association. The COI also is in contact with the faculty group of the

international classroom and the faculty council with regard to the faculty's internationalization plans in order to stay on track with the current events at the faculty.

University wide: Within the University, the COI joins the seminars of the International classroom where the COI is mainly responsible to represent the association's perspective and give input. Another seminar from the university is Groningen together, where the role of the COI can either be to share experiences from the association or to get new input from fellow participants. Furthermore, the COI is in contact with the University council in order to stay on track with the internationalization decisions made by the University.

Other associations: Important cooperation partners are especially associations that are already internationalized, such as for example Clio, the study association of international relations, or associations who have international students as their main target group, such as ESN, the Erasmus student network. The COI is responsible to keep good contact with these associations in order to share experiences and best practices and to look for possible cooperation.

9 Organization of activities

The organization of activities is not the main task of the COI. However, if he/she feels the need/ sees the opportunity to organize such activities or join existing projects by external parties, the COI may do so.

10 Funding

In case the COI expects to spend money on the internationalization measures, he/she is responsible to look for possible ways of funding out of existing funds him/ herself. As long as there is the possibility for the COI to apply for funding out of existing funds, they are expected to be the main financial source for the activities of the COI. In case the COI has reason to believe he/she will not have the possibility to receive funding of his/her activities out of existing funds, he/she is to indicate that to the board treasurer in the beginning of the year so it can be taken into account for the budget plan.

Part 3 – Internationalisation Policy Plan

This part of the document contains the internationalization policy of the board of 2017-2018 as established in the policy plan of the board 2017-2018.

Internationalisation

Regarding the fact that internationalization is an important topic within the faculty, we also want to include the topic in our policy for the coming year. Therefore, we want to continue the policy of the previous years and also look for possibilities how to optimize internationalization. We mainly want to focus on getting international students more involved within VIP. For the upcoming year, we have the new function of the Commissioner of Internationalization within our board. We think that this could contribute to the process of internationalization. Concerning the internationalization process, it is important to us not to force it but rather to facilitate it.

Accessibility

Accessibility of the association and the board is important to all members of our association. Therefore, we would like to continue the policy of the previous years and next to that, we would like to look for opportunities how to increase the accessibility of the association. Regarding the fact that our focus for the coming year lies especially on internationalization, we would like to look for options how to improve the accessibility for the target group of internationals. One example would be to look for possibilities to make English the main language of certain events.

Information

Spreading information is an important part of internationalisation. We want to strive towards an equal level of knowledge between Dutch and international students regarding what VIP stands for. It shall be one of the responsibilities of the Commissioner of Internationalization to make the concept of a study association clear to international members who may not be familiar with it.

Integration committee

We want to look for opportunities how to optimize, and where possible expand, the use of the integration committee in order to better stick to the goal of the integration committee. At the end of the academic year 2017-2018, we want to evaluate this process.