

STRATEGIC PLAN

The AUAS in 3 dimensions

Sustainable, Inclusive and
Digital

2021

2026



In the English version of the AUAS Strategic Plan we refer to three dimensions: Sustainability, Diversity & Inclusion and Digitalisation. These dimensions may also be referred to informally as the '3 Ds', which corresponds with Dutch terminology (drie D's; Duurzaamheid, Diversiteit & Inclusie en Digitalisering).

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The Strategic Plan 2021-2026 was formulated during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, a time in which society faced major issues under pressing circumstances. Increasingly, familiar patterns and traditional solutions are no longer sufficient and therefore we must urgently seek new pathways to shape effective education and research. We need to establish cooperation between many parties and across multiple traditional boundaries, which will require inventiveness, enthusiasm, trial and error and a huge amount of effort from everyone.



AUAS Executive Board
 Hanneke Reuling, Interim Chair
 Geleyn Meijer, Rector

Taking the next step

As a result, this situation perfectly illustrates the role that Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences is willing and able to play in its capacity as a metropolitan knowledge institution. We help achieve valuable innovation to tackle crucial social issues in all kinds of ways via a diverse and fluid range of partnerships. We have always trained young people to fulfil positions of responsibility in the professional field and in society. Nowadays, we strongly believe that part of our social mission includes the provision of suitable education to people who are already working and those with alternative educational needs. We are also working hard to increase the impact of our applied research on education and society by focusing on three

major dimensions in modern society: sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation.

These developments are central to the Strategic Plan 2021-2026. In this document, we describe the development pathway that AUAS will follow in the years to come in order to build upon what we have already achieved in recent years. AUAS is standing tall as an independent knowledge institution and has clearly established its own identity and profile in the region. The quality of education and research is firmly embedded in the Strategic Plan. We have also started to expand the range of education on offer to include new Master's or Associate degree programmes and courses in the field of lifelong learning. In recent years, we have intensified our focus on applied research by concentrating on a number of priority areas that have been fine-tuned to satisfy the needs of our metropolitan region. We have also increased the scale and the application of our research.

Focus on three major dimensions

In the years to come, we will continue along the trail that we have been blazing and take the next step in our development. In this regard, the themes of sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation are at the heart of everything we do. These three dimensions (the three Ds) will serve as the guiding principles for all of our teaching and applied research, operations, HR policy and interaction with our local community. Anyone who studies at or works for AUAS will clearly recognise these three issues in everything we do.

This document primarily describes the course that we will be steering over the next few years. It does not represent an exhaustive list of the activities that we will carry out in order to fulfil the ambitions defined in the Strategic Plan. More information on this matter can be found in the section below entitled 'About this Strategic Plan'.

This document was formulated in consultation with many students, lecturer-researchers and other AUAS staff, and representative advisory bodies also played a vital role. We would like to thank everyone for their contributions. By involving everybody in this way, we ensured that the ambitions in the Strategic Plan bring us all together and motivate us to work towards them collectively.

We are proud to present this vision of the future and we look forward to achieving these goals together with our students, colleagues and innumerable partners in businesses, institutions, the city, the region and beyond.

Amsterdam, December 2020

AUAS Executive Board
 Hanneke Reuling, Interim Chair
 Geleyn Meijer, Rector

This Strategic Plan (SP) describes the strategic course that Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) will follow in the period from 2021 to 2026.

The foundations of our ambitions for the next few years are formed by the mission and vision of our organisation in addition to the social mission that we fulfil as a metropolitan university of applied sciences. More on that later.

The contents of this plan were formulated following broad consultation among students, lecturers, lecturer-researchers, professors, programme managers, deans, executive staff and support services within AUAS. Multiple consultations – in both verbal and written form – were held in order to crystallise the universally supported framework documented in this plan. The Strategic Plan gives direction to the work performed by all parties within AUAS. For this reason, everything in this document is written using the first person plural ‘we’ as it represents the perspective of the entire AUAS community. The SP 2021-2026 was formulated at the end of 2020 by the Executive Board and approved by the Central Representative Advisory Council and the Supervisory Board.

Quality and impact at our core

The quality of the education we provide to students and the applied research that we conduct is at the core of everything we do. This quality is the number one performance indicator for everything that we are currently doing and everything we are



developing for the future. Every programme, every professorship and every other unit within AUAS must be able to demonstrate their high quality at any given moment.

This Strategic Plan will describe the developments that AUAS wishes to make in the years to come based on five key ambitions. However, formulating our own ambitions is just the start as even the best plans count for nothing if they don't deliver results.

How will the strategy described in the Strategic Plan be tangible to our students? How will businesses and other institutions recognise it? And what impact will it have on the community and society in which we live and work?

These are the things that truly matter. For this reason, each of the five key ambitions includes a number of promises derived from the ambition in question. These promises describe the intended effect on the target groups to which they relate. The promises show what we wish to achieve, what results we are working towards and what we are committed to fulfilling.

The world in which we live and work is continuously developing and AUAS is determined to keep up with major developments and contribute to finding

solutions. As a result, we must regularly recalibrate our course to verify that it is taking us in the right direction. We will continue to do this in the years to come, meaning that the goals can be updated during the course of the SP.

From ambition to achievement

Every ambition requires a solid implementation plan. How will AUAS achieve the goals it has set? What concrete activities will be initiated? This document predominantly describes what AUAS wishes to achieve. How we plan to do this will be discussed by all parties in the period following the finalisation of this plan. A number of issues will be addressed collectively via AUAS-wide programmes, although for many of the issues described in this Strategic Plan, the individual degree programme teams, Centres of Expertise or other units within AUAS will formulate their own strategy and take responsibility for the achievement of the results described in this document.

The goals that we have set are the same, although the pathways to success may differ.

This gives all units within AUAS freedom to set their own course, although the ultimate goals apply to everyone and we will systematically monitor and discuss progress. This strategy is fully in line with the nature and the management philosophy of our multifaceted and multicultural institution.



2021: paving the way

This document was formulated in 2020, the year in which the COVID-19 pandemic radically changed the way we live and work. In mid-March, the acute switch from on-site to online teaching and working demanded a great deal from students and staff and continues to do so as of the start of 2021. During this period, our institution, our education and our research have undergone substantial and long-lasting changes. Our teaching activities switched from mostly on-campus to mostly online. A combination of the two, known as blended education, is the future.

In 2021, the further development of blended education and attention to student and staff welfare became AUAS's highest priority. For this reason, we will take time in 2021 to meticulously flesh out the pathways described in the SP into concrete implementation plans. For a variety of these pathways, many inspiring initiatives are already in progress that will blaze our trail into the future. For areas in which this is not yet the case, we will take the time to carefully set our course.

The next section describes the mission and vision of AUAS, followed by a brief description of our social mission. These provide vital context for the five key ambitions for the years to come, which we subsequently describe in the sections thereafter.

AUAS is devoted to developing and sharing knowledge that adds value to society and professional practice. We do this by forging connections between education, applied research and the professional field. AUAS also fulfils a social mission by delivering impactful teaching and applied research.

I.e. by training secondary school graduates and working people to become consummate professionals with the knowledge and competences required to play a prominent role in the business world and in society. We are very proud that the professional skills of our students, the professionals of tomorrow, meet the expectations of the business sector.

Why does applied research play such a vital role within AUAS? One reason is because it is crucial that future professionals develop the competence of reflectiveness. By conducting research, students learn to solve practical problems and develop brand new opportunities. The new knowledge that is systematically obtained from our research is then integrated into our teaching curriculum. Another reason is that AUAS wishes to use its demand-driven applied research to collaborate with businesses and institutions and contribute to new knowledge and practical innovation that has substantial impact on professional practice, including within AUAS itself. The third reason is that

applied research helps to create interesting career paths within AUAS.

For this reason, teaching and applied research are inextricably linked. This factor is clearly visible within AUAS's Centres of Expertise, where teaching and research are intrinsically interconnected to social issues in the professional field, in the public sector and in wider society.

Mission

AUAS's mission is as follows:

The Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) is a knowledge institution offering a broad range of professional education programmes to a diverse mix of students, enabling them to fully develop their talent and independently practise their chosen professions at a high level. By connecting education and applied research, the AUAS enables innovation in the professional sector and community in, and around, the cosmopolitan city of Amsterdam.

Vision

The vision that AUAS formulated in 2018 was derived from this mission and also lays solid foundations for this Strategic Plan. The vision is based on four pillars: Students, Knowledge Institution, Cooperation and Amsterdam.

- 1 The pillar **Students** indicates that The AUAS is a widely accessible university of applied sciences, where a diverse mix of students feel welcome and challenged. We invest in our students: nurturing the development of their talent, entrepreneurial mindset, personal growth and professional identity. Through this, the AUAS is the driving force behind emancipation in Amsterdam. Each student is in charge of their own study path while we invest in education of all shapes and sizes and various learning routes. At the AUAS, students develop themselves into world citizens and skilled professionals who are ready to enter the labour market. Graduates and professionals alike can access lifelong learning at the AUAS.
- 2 We are a **Knowledge Institution** that develops new insights and understanding that add value to the business world, the education sector and science. To do so, we focus on developing and sharing knowledge by forging connections between education, applied research and professional practice and taking an interdisciplinary approach to tackling complex problems in the business world. This is the common thread in all of our curricula and research. AUAS trains students to become



reflective and innovative professionals and we collaborate with the professional field to develop innovation via design-based research. We identify developments and knowledge gaps in the professional field and tackle them together with professionals, lecturer-researchers and students. Together, we conduct projects that develop new knowledge, methods and tools to facilitate capacity building within the professional field.

- 3 The pillar **Cooperation** is all about staff who function as a role model for students and take ownership as part of diversely constituted teams. AUAS wants to be a learning organisation in which monitoring and continual improvement of the quality of our education and research is second nature. High-quality is inherent to our culture at AUAS.
- 4 **Amsterdam** is the fourth pillar in AUAS's vision. Our students, lecturer-researchers and all other staff all live, work and play in this region and they work together with all other relevant parties to devise creative solutions and sustainable innovation to tackle complex urban issues. The results of our teaching and research have a significant impact on professional practice and society. We train people to pursue a career within an international and intercultural setting. The Amsterdam region is the laboratory in which we gain knowledge, and this knowledge can subsequently be applied to any urban region.

The four pillars of the AUAS vision are linked to four target groups: students, staff, the professional field and stakeholders (organisations, institutions and businesses) in the Amsterdam and Greater Amsterdam regions. In the following sections, we describe how the ambitions and strategies formulated in this Strategic Plan will become visible and tangible to the various target groups in the years to come. This represents the promises we have made to each of the target groups.

Social mission

The world in which we live, study and work is continually in transformation, fuelled by factors such as the climate crisis, digital innovation, social and economic changes, and many other issues.

These kinds of transformations to society and the professional field are the primary point of departure for the ambitions we have formulated in the following section for the years to come. As a result, we have explicitly established sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation as our guiding principles in all of our education and research as well as within our own organisation.

Social transformations also result in a more dynamic job market that sets new and original requirements for us. All professionals – young and old – must be capable of anticipating change, they must possess the competences required to deal with change and they must take control of their own career development. The importance of lifelong learning is therefore increasing substantially.

This has established a new mission for us, with businesses asking us to provide additional training for their staff and new target groups approaching us with new requests and expectations. As a result, we have had to redesign and reorganise our education in order to sufficiently serve these different target groups. We have to become every bit as flexible and resilient as modern professionals need to be.

Our five ambitions

AUAS's mission, vision and social mission have been crystallised into the following five key ambitions that will determine the course that AUAS will steer in the years to come:

- 1 Sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation (3 Ds) can be found everywhere
- 2 Increase our impact together with urban partners
- 3 Enable students to have more control of their own learning pathway
- 4 Students and staff continue to shape a rich and stimulating learning environment
- 5 Improve our own flexibility and resilience

AMBITIONS AND PROMISES





Sustainability, Diversity & Inclusion and Digitalisation can be found everywhere



To us, it is only natural that we work and learn in an inclusive environment where our actions and choices are as sustainable as possible and digitally innovative. In doing so, we contribute to the quality of education and research and to significant social transformations across these three dimensions.

For the purposes of value orientation, AUAS has endorsed the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (<https://sdgs.un.org>). Based on these SDGs, we established sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation as the three central dimensions (3 Ds) for our strategic development in the years to come. All three are vital social transformations that play a central role in our development and substantial attention will be devoted to them in our teaching curricula and research programmes. Every student will learn about sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation and how they are inextricable aspects of modern citizenship and professional practice. They will also be visibly and tangibly integrated into everything we do within our academic community. Sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation add a multicultural and multifaceted dimension to our student body, our workforce and our operations. These themes build upon what we established in the previous Strategic Plan and what we have been working on over the past few years, such as

PROMISES

- ▶ At the AUAS, every student and every member of staff will feel welcome, at home, challenged and safe, and will have equal opportunities.
- ▶ On the labour market and in society, AUAS alumni and staff will be recognised as people for whom sustainability, diversity & inclusion, and digitalisation are an obvious given and who are very capable of making that a reality both professionally and personally.
- ▶ The AUAS has demonstrated to businesses, organisations and society that the applied research conducted at the AUAS generates new knowledge and innovations premised on sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation.
- ▶ Students, staff and partners feel that sustainability, diversity & inclusion and digitalisation are the underlying principles of all operational management and HRM policy at the AUAS.

sustainability of business operations and innovation, improvement of the reliability of the network, digitalisation of teaching and research and the use of mobile devices.



Sustainability,
Diversity &
Inclusion and
Digitalisation
can be found
everywhere

► Diversity and inclusion

Our student body is very diverse. This diversity reflects society in the Amsterdam metropolitan area and the professional environment in which our students and graduates will work in the future. To us, it is a given that our working and learning environment must also be diverse and inclusive. Diversity and inclusion are embedded and integrated into our entire teaching and research portfolio. Our education offers an inspiring learning environment for all of our students in which we can understand and appreciate the differences between us as well as recognising the importance and value of connection. AUAS serves as an engine of emancipation and strives to make every student's academic career as successful and valuable as possible. We create an environment in which everybody can contribute and optimally develop their personal value and talent.

We train students to become 'urban professionals'. We equip them with the capacities and tools that they will require to practise their profession within a complex metropolitan environment with a strong international orientation and a plethora of different cultures living and working alongside one another. We therefore encourage 'Inclusive Internationalisation' and devote attention to international and intercultural aspects in our education and research programmes. Experience of working and/or studying abroad facilitates the realisation of diversity and adds valuable knowledge and competences to our teaching.

At AUAS, we all work together to establish a diverse and inclusive learning and working environment that offers equal opportunities to our staff and



reflects the make-up of the regional population and our student body. By displaying positive behaviour, we take our responsibility as peers and are open with and interested in our students, colleagues and partners in the city. We care for each other and together we create a safe environment for learning. We discuss differences, celebrate successes and solve problems.

Diversity and inclusion is anchored into our HR policy. Our staff, faculties and service departments take responsibility and ownership for creating an inclusive organisation within the centrally formulated vision and AUAS-wide frameworks. We also optimally equip them with the skills and tools they need to do this.

► Sustainability

All AUAS students will be introduced to the aspects of sustainability applicable to their programme and if desired, they can study sustainability in greater depth, e.g. via extracurricular activities or minors. Sustainability is interwoven into AUAS's research priority areas and our professorships offer students the opportunity to conduct research into aspects of sustainability, such as the circular transition, the energy transition and climate resilience.

AUAS has a responsible ecological footprint and serves as a shining example of sustainability for students, staff and other stakeholders. AUAS invests in measures to promote sustainable transport and our target is to achieve a 25% reduction of the ecological footprint of all journeys by 2026. This includes both everyday commutes and work-related travel, including flights and goods transport.

All of AUAS's buildings will be Paris-compliant by 2040 (all electric) depending on the progress of the national energy transition (energy generation), which will probably only be carbon neutral (CO₂ neutral) by 2050. AUAS's goal is to make our campuses entirely free of natural gas before 2040 and to research the optimal power-generation structure for AUAS campuses. We are working on a plan for sustainable use of raw materials that generates zero waste and within which all disused products and materials are reused in a manner appropriate to a circular economy. By 2050, all AUAS campuses will be circular, nature-inclusive and climate resilient. In the next few years, we will

reduce the ecological footprint of our ICT usage and resources by 25%.

In our canteens and catering establishments, we will offer a range of food and other products that is compatible with our knowledge of the limits of our planet, for example, by replacing animal proteins with vegetable proteins and preventing food waste. Furthermore, AUAS will strive to offer responsibly manufactured products whose production causes as little deforestation, overfishing and/or exploitation as possible.

► Digitalisation

Digitalisation has established deep roots in our society and technology, with unprecedented new opportunities being offered in practically all areas. The possibilities offered by innovations like artificial intelligence, big data, virtual/augmented reality, the internet of things and 5G are enormous and in the years to come, the number of possibilities will continue to skyrocket. One consequence of this is that digitalisation will transform professional practice in all sectors for which the AUAS trains its students. And of course, digitalisation will also transform higher education itself, including organisational operations and HR policy. Data also plays a substantial role in our learning and working processes. We make responsible use of this data, with a solid focus on security, privacy, management, transparency and ethics.

We are helping to shape the transition to a digital society and contributing to responsible and user-



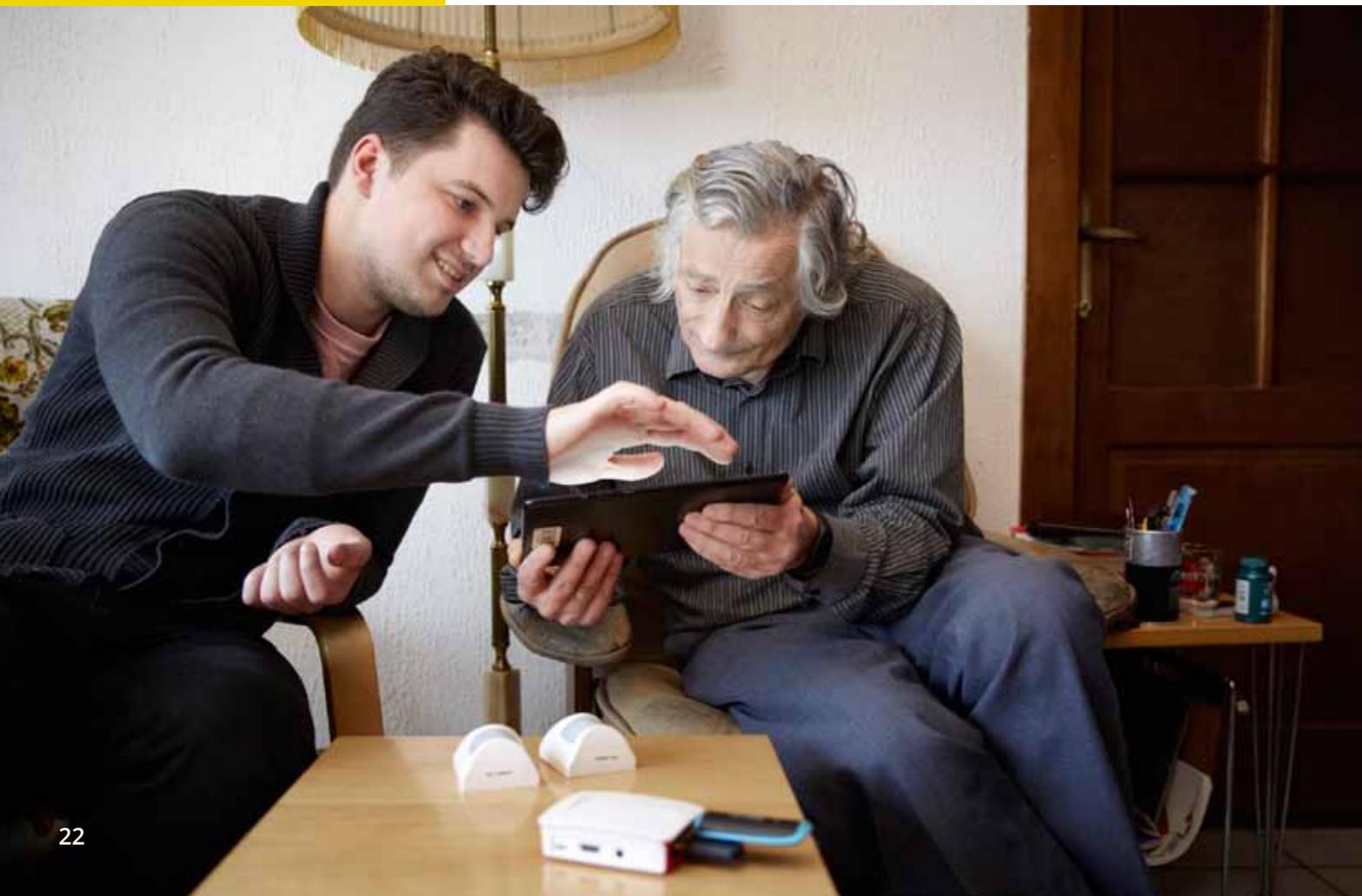
oriented development of technology. Our graduates enter the professional field armed with the latest knowledge and skills in the area of digitalisation. Via open education, open science and our open digital ecosystem, we are contributing to the development of knowledge in the professional field and society.

We also incorporate the latest digital developments into our curricula: every student graduating from AUAS is digitally skilled and fully prepared for the digital transformation taking place in the professional field for which they have been trained.

The knowledge and skills that they gain also incorporate ethics and integrity in relation to digitalisation, as these issues are permanently addressed and discussed at AUAS. We make use of digital resources in order to improve our relationship with students, staff and partners and enable them to remain part of our knowledge network for their entire lives in a variety of roles.



Increase our impact together with urban partners



As a knowledge institution, we integrate developments in urban society and the professional field into our education and applied research. Together with our partners we create a substantial boost towards the future.

We build upon results achieved from the previous Strategic Plan. In that period, we reinforced connections with the current regional job market and established a recognisable research learning pathway in all Bachelor's programmes. The range of teaching was expanded and together with the lifelong learning programmes, it will serve professionals by providing training in transformational issues in the job market. Our research is consistently incorporated into our teaching programmes. Furthermore, our research capacity has been greatly expanded and we are focusing even more strongly on current issues in the Amsterdam metropolitan area as well as facilitating greater cooperation and coordination with the professional field. Our research priority areas have been developed into our Centres of Expertise.

PROMISES

- ▶ Our professional and societal partners acknowledge that our applied research is of a high standard and that it contributes to valuable knowledge development and innovations.
- ▶ Students can see that the knowledge generated from our applied research is incorporated into educational curricula quickly and effectively.
- ▶ The professional field and society recognise AUAS students, alumni, staff and partners as inquisitive, enterprising and engaged professionals who make significant contributions to important current issues. They are well prepared to play a responsible role in an internationally and interculturally-oriented urban environment.
- ▶ On the labour market in the metropolitan region of Amsterdam employers believe that, thanks to the AUAS, there are adequate numbers of well-educated people available in the relevant sectors.
- ▶ Students and employers consider the AUAS teaching portfolio to be tailored to their diverse educational needs, underpinning their life-long development.



Increase our impact together with urban partners

► Education and research

Our teaching portfolio and our applied research agenda concentrate on current and complex issues affecting urban areas based on an interdisciplinary approach and multidisciplinary teams. We adjust our teaching profile and the research agenda to ensure coordination of content and to verify that they meet the specific needs, characteristics and changes applicable to professional practice in Amsterdam. Every three years, we examine whether it is necessary to make changes to our teaching practice, and if so, how. Whenever new disciplines arise, we expand our teaching portfolio to include them and when disciplines fall out of use, we phase them out. There is always an interplay between the AUAS-wide decisions and ambitions and the faculty-level institutional strategy for teaching and research.

► Lifelong learning

We train students for both the public and the private sector: our lifelong learning programmes are closely linked to our social mission and serve two purposes: (1) qualifications (via learning pathways) or (2) transitional issues in the city (via Centres of Expertise). This means that for qualification issues, we specifically focus on the growing number of retraining professionals who are migrating to different jobs and different sectors as a result of the three dimensions defined above (among other dynamics) and therefore require new qualifications. With regard to both qualification and transitional issues, we are also focusing on people taking

retraining and further training who wish to continually develop and sharpen their professional skills. Our lifelong learning portfolio is therefore a reflection of our regular curriculum, state-of-the-art knowledge derived from research and/or modernisation of our teaching portfolio.

► Centres of Expertise

Our Centres of Expertise (CoEs) are increasingly taking shape. We conduct interdisciplinary cooperation with the business sector and society as part of a quadruple helix in which the professional field (the business sector and social organisations), government (the municipality), citizens, and

education & research (knowledge institutions) work together to solve complex issues. The Centres of Expertise are based on metropolitan issues such as Urban Education, Urban Technology, Urban Vitality, Urban Governance and Social Innovation, Creative Innovation and Applied Artificial Intelligence. These themes are also in line with national and European agendas.

This requires greater focus, capacity and impact as well as expansion of the knowledge and cooperation networks. At the national level, we contribute to powerful collaborations in teaching and research in order to share experiences and strengths, such as the Netherlands AI Coalition, the Acceleration Agenda, the National Platform for Applied Research (NPPO), open science and other such joint ventures. At the regional level, we closely collaborate with other Amsterdam-based higher education partners: VU University Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam UMC and other universities of applied sciences.

► Social entrepreneurship

We will devote greater attention to boosting social entrepreneurship among our students and staff. This can be done by offering greater continuity in the entrepreneurial activities throughout the entire programme as well as paying attention to facilitation of students after graduation. At the organisational level, all entrepreneurial activities in the chain (the Entrepreneurship Programme, IXA, AUAS Holding, innovation trainees) are optimally compatible with each other.



Enable students to have more control of their own learning pathway



Students will have more control of their own learning pathway, so that they can make their own choices with respect to content, time, form and place to suit their personal talents and ambitions.

Students differ in their knowledge, experience, circumstances, learning needs and career interests. Some enter higher education straight from secondary school, while others have jobs and want to combine their work with a study programme. Every student has different needs and therefore personal learning pathways are vital. In this regard, we also focus on students who switch programmes within AUAS or from other institutions, students who are seeking a greater challenge, working students, transfer students and both degree and non-degree seeking students. We take into account the specific talents, knowledge and skills possessed by all transfer students, we recognise these talents and explicitly challenge the students to nurture them. A sense of ownership helps to boost students' commitment to the learning process and elective options help instil this sense of ownership.

At the same time, students can also follow a predetermined learning pathway if they so choose. This places extra demands on the organisers of the programme. This approach allows AUAS to optimise the flexibility and resilience of professionals in the job market.

PROMISES

- ▶ Students and professionals feel that they can influence the content, form, tempo, time and place of learning and feel supported by an appropriate mix of online, physical and/or hybrid activities.
- ▶ Students learn to direct their own development and are supervised in their decision-making by academic advisers. Students have access to correct, personalised information.
- ▶ Students feel that continuous learning pathways are available and that the education is academically feasible.

In this regard, we are building upon the previous Strategic Plan in which flexibilisation of education, blended learning, solid and feasible education and the facilitation of special target groups was substantially boosted. We developed more professional Master's programmes and associate degree programmes (within the AUAS Community College) and expanded the range of lifelong learning programmes. In the years to come, we will boost cohesion within the entire teaching portfolio and enable individual learning pathways for students that transcend the boundaries of departments and faculties.

3

Enable students to have more control of their own learning pathway

► Continuous learning pathways

We offer a broad and differentiated range of teaching in virtually all sectors at levels 5-8 in the European qualification framework (from associate degree to professional doctorate). We also offer continuous learning pathways within the national framework established by The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH). Our lifelong learning programmes are also included in the continual learning pathways (qualifications) or are developed within one of our Centres of Expertise (transformation). For example, a module from a degree programme could also be taken separately for the purposes of lifelong learning, which offers interesting possibilities for working people and alumni. We offer programmes that result in a degree certificate or other qualifications/certification (such as microcredentials) that prove the bearer has been assessed in accordance with explicit and predefined learning objectives. All of our study programmes have been accredited and

they are regularly evaluated by an independent and highly skilled institution.

We organise continuous learning pathways for all of our students. When updating degree programmes or other programmes, we prioritise the development of learning pathways between existing programmes over new programmes. We also prioritise follow-on Master's programmes that do not require an obligatory pre-Master's programme.

► Freedom of choice

We have expanded the amount of electives for students to choose from and make joint agreements regarding these choices. However, students also retain the option of following predefined learning pathways. At the same time, we also provide options for students seeking a greater challenge. During the development of the curricula, its design included agreements governing teaching,



education logistics, design criteria and selection rules. To enable this, it is essential that lecturer teams cooperate beyond the traditional boundaries of the programmes and clusters to form learning communities, both within faculties and between different faculties..

► Student support

Giving students more control over their own learning pathway can only be a success if a number of vital preconditions are met. One of these is to boost student guidance and support and to ensure effective digital support when it comes to student decision-making. Other examples include student-oriented guidance, a stimulating learning environment and selection rules to support the student. Our lecturers must have up-to-date and personal insight into their students' situation – this will allow them to offer the right support at the right time.

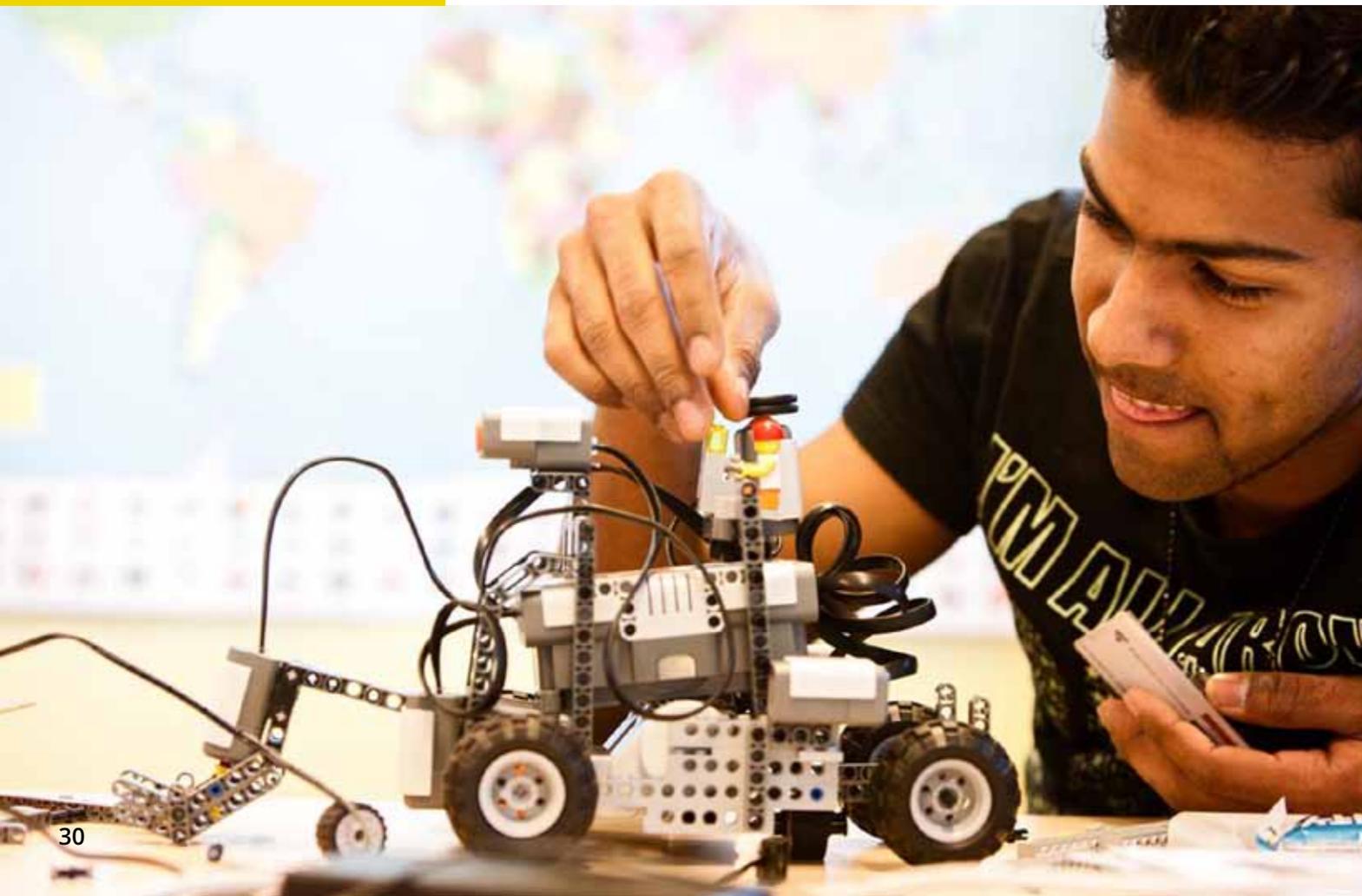


► Well-organised education

Well-organised education is another crucial precondition to give students greater control of their learning pathway. Flexibilisation of education places additional demands on the organisation and requires solid educational logistics. The impact of flexibilisation of education on business operations is huge. To ensure solid organisation, it is vital to think from the perspective of the student journey from the orientation period to various forms of enrolment up to and including the presentation of the degree certificate. An integrated strategy for educational logistics and administrative processes and systems is vital in order to make agreements and to provide students and staff with the right applications. We are investing in digital tools, a digital teaching portfolio, online and offline teaching methods and optimum use of the digital learning environment, Brightspace.



Students and staff continue to shape a rich and stimulating learning environment



In everything we do, we ask ourselves how it will contribute to student success and to a stimulating learning environment on location, digitally and in the city.

This is yet another aspect in which we are building upon the achievements from the previous SP, which actively focused on student-oriented academic counselling and promoted active participation of students in societies and in representative advisory bodies. It also laid the foundations for a rich learning environment provided by, for and in collaboration with the city, as well as a coherent internationalisation policy.

PROMISES

- ▶ Together, students and staff will build a stimulating learning environment where all students can enjoy the best possible conditions to complete their learning pathway successfully.
- ▶ We embrace the concept of 'students as partners'. Students, staff and external partners collectively form a diverse and stimulating community, where learning, developing and innovating unite us. We do this at the various AUAS locations, in the city and online.





Students and staff continue to shape a rich and stimulating learning environment

► Learning community

Together, students, lecturer-researchers and support staff form a learning community in which working together and learning from each other is the core philosophy. Staff contribute to student guidance based on their own specific expertise and work together with them in a stimulating, challenging and inspiring learning environment. We encourage mutual commitment between students and staff. We work together with students on a basis of equality and see them as future academic colleagues: student assessors, senior students serving as mentors, interns and student assistants all play an integral part in the AUAS community.

► Tailor-made student support and guidance

Everything we do is based on ensuring the student's success, although this focuses on finding the most suitable learning pathway for the student rather



than just the quickest route to graduation. Attention to the first 100 days is a vital part of this approach. We give students the time to gather knowledge, to learn and to discover. They view AUAS as a stimulating community and receive tailor-made support and guidance throughout their programme with regard to both their development (qualifications, socialisation and personal development) and support (student welfare, both preventative and in the event of problems). We provide tailor-made student support all the way from the orientation phase to graduation based on optimal communication and data provision, coaching and support and attention to student welfare. We also ensure that lecturer-researchers and academic advisers are fully equipped to provide this support. Every academic adviser is trained and

accessible to the students. We continuously invest in student engagement by providing 'your home away from home' via study and student associations.

► Inspiring environment

We are further developing our various campuses and the digital ecosystem and offering an attractive and inspiring environment for students, staff and partners in the city. The campuses and our digital ecosystem are characterised by openness and are designed in such a way that collaboration and learning become interwoven. During their programme, students gain experience via the 'international classroom' in our urban learning environment and/or by working or studying within an international context.

The active participation of AUAS's lecturer-researchers and students within international partnerships boosts the quality of both our professional education and our applied research.

► Blended Learning

We are investing in more digital tools, a digital teaching portfolio and online teaching methods. AUAS's education is characterised by blended learning: a carefully considered and targeted mix of online and offline resources within a high-quality physical and digital learning environment. We are investing in the quality of both online and offline teaching, virtual practical education, open education, open science, artificial intelligence, greater use of big data and digital organisational strategy.





Improve our own flexibility and resilience



We are a learning organisation where everyone contributes to the quality of education and research and to the professional field and society with a sense of ownership and professionalism.

Both our society and the professional fields that we train students to enter are changing at lightning speed. AUAS continually adjusts to these developments and plays a pioneering role in this progress. To ensure we play this role effectively, we are boosting the flexibility and resilience of our organisation and staff.

Everyone contributes to the quality of our teaching and research and the development of our students, the AUAS, the surrounding area, our colleagues and themselves based on a strong sense of ownership and professionalism. The complexity of the major metropolitan issues that we are tackling requires a strategy that connects a variety of professional disciplines and people both within and beyond AUAS. We work together as part of fluid and multidisciplinary teams. In this way, we get the very most out of the wide range of competences, expertise, experience, disciplines, backgrounds, qualities and roles represented by the team. We share an entrepreneurial culture characterised by openness, transparency, encouragement and participation. All units of AUAS take responsibility for achieving the AUAS-wide objectives in collaboration with the professional field. The representative advisory bodies also play a vital role at all levels of AUAS.

PROMISES

- ▶ AUAS staff work together in evolving and diverse teams.
- ▶ We work in an enterprising culture where there is scope for initiative. Where teams are given responsibility and take ownership of it. Key elements of that culture include openness, transparency, participation and accountability.
- ▶ We invest in the flexibility and resilience of both our staff and the organisation. Employees assume control of their own professional development and of their own career.
- ▶ Employees feel that AUAS values them for their qualities and professional skills and that professional development is both encouraged and facilitated.

Once again, this aspect builds upon the previous SP, which included substantial investment in the further development of education, training, advice and development of all AUAS staff (including teaching and ICT skills), the establishment of knowledge-sharing platforms and the improvement of internal mobility.

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Improve our own flexibility and resilience

► Quality culture

We are continuously developing and set ourselves personal goals to ensure we remain enterprising and flexible both now and in the future. We encourage each other by adopting a critical attitude and creating a safe environment by respecting ownership and working on continuous improvement via dialogue and reflection. This is based on our quality culture (leadership – ownership – actorship for all staff). We feel like the owners of our work and continually strive to improve. This requires a comprehensive approach characterised by shared ownership, understanding of each other's work, exemplary behaviour, leadership that connects people and a common language.

► Professional growth

We encourage professional growth among our staff. In addition to vertical growth (leadership positions),

we also offer a wealth of opportunities for talent development via broadening and deepening of roles and expertise or via hybrid working methods. We offer excellent career paths for lecturer-researchers and we encourage our staff to develop their international and intercultural skills via the Inclusive Internationalisation programme. Lifelong learning for our staff and students has been explicitly integrated into our Centres of Expertise.

► Continuity and flexibility

To guarantee both continuity of teams and the required flexibility of teaching and research, we ensure sufficient investment in and attention for teaching and research via programme teams, learning communities and research groups. This demands transparency, fairness and commitment from every individual in the team and between the



teams. It also requires us to devote even more attention to leadership that serves and connects people, career perspectives both within and beyond AUAS, a safe working environment, continuous testing of blind spots, systematic forms of inequality and trust in the professionalism of staff.

Our work is increasingly moving away from on-site methods to include much more online and hybrid working methods and the use of data will also play a vital role. This will require rapid and substantial investment in our digital literacy, additional training and support in relation to blended learning and greater awareness of digital security, privacy and data-driven working methods.

► Interconnected operations

Finally, our institution's organisational operations will remain solid and stable. Our operations are characterised by effective collaboration at all levels, in implementation and operating chains and via a diverse range of contacts and connections. For this reason, we are investing in 'interconnected operations', which unite the operational process with the education and research processes. We consider 'operations' to be a coherent whole of essential activities required to effectively perform AUAS's core tasks and to ensure we are flexible enough to deal with the challenges that the future has in store for us.

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