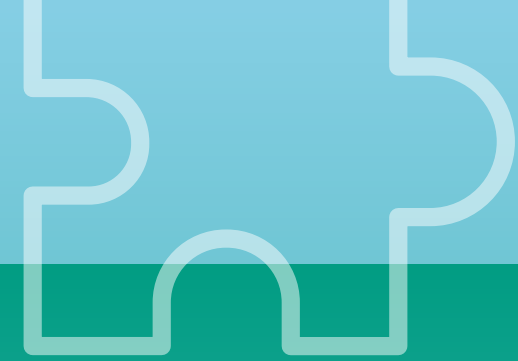


Talent for the future



Contents



Preface	3
Saxion basics <i>What we want, do and demonstrate every day</i>	4
Saxion students <i>Successful and committed</i>	5
Saxion education <i>Lifelong learning and talent development</i>	7
Saxion research <i>More impact through innovation</i>	10
Saxion entrepreneurship <i>Direct to the region</i>	12
Saxion people and organisation <i>Talent in motion</i>	13
Appendix: True North	15



The world is continually changing. That is beyond your control. However, what you can control is how you react to change. What are you going to do differently in the coming years and what are you going to keep the same? What moves are you going to make? Whatever the case, it is important to have a solid anchor. To know who you are and what you can mean to others and society. Look at what is happening around you and so shape your future. This is what you do as a lecturer and researcher. This is what we do as an applied university. This is what you will be doing with your talent as a Saxion student.

Whatever individual talents you may have, as a student you do have talent for the future, because you are the future. And at Saxion we help each and every student turn their dream of the future into reality. Here we lay down the foundations for a prosperous life in the region. We don't do this on our own, we are embedded in the communities of the Eastern and Central Netherlands. In Enschede, Deventer and Apeldoorn we educate and train professionals, carry out applied research and stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship.

The experience, talent and future vision of everyone involved with Saxion is truly indispensable in continuing to contribute to regional prosperity. This is why students, staff and regional partners shared their visions with us in 2024. Thanks to these perspectives we now have an accurate picture of what is happening and what is needed. Two circumstances are providing us with an extra challenge: an increasing number of students are having a difficult time, and there are less young people. Many students in the Netherlands, also with us, are experiencing stress and mental health problems. This can hinder study progression and attaining their best conceivable future. We want to solve this by offering suitable study pathways and by being an applied university where everyone feels seen and welcome, irrespective of background, identity or personal situation.

Fewer young people means fewer students, which can lead to a downward spiral for the region. An applied university such as Saxion, can break this spiral by offering high-quality education and being committed to the growth of our applied research. This enables the region to remain economically, innovatively and socially strong as well as being an attractive place to spread your wings.

In our strategy for the coming years we are focusing on four movements: our commitment to student success, offering a broader range of study programmes, substantial research growth, and a more result-oriented professional culture. This will enable us to take great strides in fulfilling our societal role, despite having fewer students and therefore less money. We will provide our region with the talent it needs to build a sustainable, digital and safe society.

This strategy will only come to fruition if we work on it together. We know we can succeed thanks to our talented staff. For we are Saxion, a university of applied sciences with talent for the future.

Saxion Executive Board

Anka Mulder, Timo Kos and Jan van der Boon



What we want, do and demonstrate every day

What Saxion wants

Saxion wants to use its talent for the future for a sustainable, digital, and safe society. We believe that together, we need to learn, think and act differently for tomorrow's world. To have due consideration for climate, biodiversity, scarcity of resources, and well-being of both humans and animals. Only in this way can we maintain our broad prosperity, and have a healthy and good existence. Saxion wants to be a place that breathes talent for the future in all it does. Setting the tone with talented lecturers, leading applied research and the most modern programmes customised to regional needs. We have a solid core of study programmes. To meet the current and future needs of the regional labour market we will continue to modernise and broaden our range of study programmes.

We want to contribute as much as we can to the personal and professional growth of our students and to the strength of the Eastern and Central Netherlands region. This region expects us to provide knowledge, practical solutions and professionals who will make a difference in the coming decades. We want the new generation of students to be able to develop and build a bright future. We want to be the best possible connector of talent and future in this part of the country and that is why it is our ambition to be among the best applied universities in the Netherlands.

What Saxion does

At our inclusive and personal applied university we train students for their role in society through high-quality education. We help strengthen the region by increasing our applied research which meets the demands of the business community and public sectors, such as healthcare and education. We work on innovation, encourage lifelong learning and inspire our students to make unconventional choices and be creative in their entrepreneurship.

In our education, research and entrepreneurship, we focus on what you can achieve with smart interaction between people and technology: Living Technology. By applying this focus on connecting knowledge and technology universally, we contribute to a more sustainable, digital and safe society. This enables us to achieve the sustainable development goals, contribute

to resolving the social issues of the day and of tomorrow, as well as encouraging successful new businesses that meet regional needs.

We care about the well-being of our students and offer them the right support and incentives to successfully complete their studies. We ensure that they are more than professionally competent at the end of their study and we give them the opportunity to look beyond borders, into other fields, other sectors, other countries.

Based on our conviction that people get energy and strength from giving each other attention, we also take good care of our lecturers, researchers and support staff. This is how we make sure that everyone feels at home with us and feels personally seen and known. We support each other in strengthening a result-oriented, professional culture at Saxion. This enables us to get the best out of our talent for the future.



What Saxion demonstrates every day

At our enterprising applied university, we focus on results in a personal and connected way. We do this through core values: being cooperative, personal, enterprising, enthusiastic and daring.

SOCIAL WORK ENGAGES PEOPLE
ES TO ADDRESS LIFE CHALLENGES
WELLBEING



Student success and well-being

We want everyone who studies with us to successfully complete their programme within a reasonable period of time, have an enjoyable study time and be able to look back on it with pride. We can help students develop into enterprising and self-aware professionals. We know that this doesn't come naturally to everyone. Study success and well-being go hand in hand. This is why we try to provide a supportive learning environment in which students can study successfully and there is attention for everyone's well-being, personal safety and sense of belonging. This helps us prevent unnecessary drop-out and study delays. Lecturers play a key role in this, giving students personal attention alongside subject-based supervision.

Successful and committed

Supervision from day one

Study preparation, study onboarding, career orientation as well as good supervision during the study programme and in cases of potential drop out: these are all key elements in study success of our students. We see that students sometimes drop out or are delayed unnecessarily, because they cannot easily switch programme in the first year. We are going to make changing course and moving to another study programme easier and provide better support. We will also review our binding study advice policy. This will help us ensure that every student can follow a suitable study pathway leading to a graduation certificate. Students will also receive better help from us in developing study and planning skills.

Student bonding

'Do I belong?' We want everyone to be able to answer this emotional question with a resounding 'yes'. This is why we are intensifying the attention we give to students, so that they feel more connected to their study programme and fellow students and also feel seen, known and appreciated. We use Home Groups to encourage the professional and personal growth and bonding of our students and we are setting up student lounges at each school. We are improving the coaching and pedagogical-didactic skills of our lecturers, study coaches and support staff through training and peer

review. This enables us to provide a vibrant and supportive study and student environment, one which under good supervision, lets students develop life skills during their studies including independence, self-reliance and dealing with setbacks. This makes our students stronger and more resilient. Student bonding after graduation is also good for regional networks and helps the next generation of students. This is why we promote a lively community of former students who remain involved with Saxion and share their knowledge and experience with new students.

Clarity and fewer surprises

In our cooperation with students it is important that we keep our promises and do not surprise them. We provide a sound pedagogical climate in which we are predictable with clear deadlines, timetables and agreements concerning attendance. This also includes publishing timetables on time without last-minute changes. We ensure that the relevance of a programme component has been made clear and we look at how we can give students more influence over their studies. The quality of the digital learning environment and logistical support shall improve with easier to find, clear and up-to-date information.

Study comes first

Completing a full-time study programme within the normal duration requires full focus on studying, attending lectures, practicals and doing project work. The fact that not everyone manages this, is partly due to studying not being given top priority in a student's life, resulting in a lack of motivation. Many students have to juggle priorities: they study, care for others and have to work to make ends meet. Is it realistic to ask students to put their education first? Yes, in Saxion's opinion. We want good attendance to be the norm. This is the combined responsibility of the student and the programme. We will make arrangements with students and help them find the right balance between what they do inside and outside their studies. We will do this by providing a clear structure, giving plenty of options and by having students who feel seen and appreciated.



Part-time jobs that provide more than cash

Part-time jobs are a necessity for many students. How great is it when your side job not only gives you cash, but is also useful for your future professional career? And takes up less time? We are going to help students find jobs while they are studying that are good for their development. By doing so we want to contribute to creating a solid bond between students and the regional network while they are still studying. The contacts that Saxion maintains to achieve this are also good for our broad collaborative relationship with employers in the region including entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized businesses, healthcare institutions and educational and government organisations. We also look at what Saxion has to offer including positions such as student assistant or research assistant. This increases motivation to successfully complete study programmes on time and so give students a stronger start in the job market.

Arranging internships and work after graduation

We help students come into contact with employers. The aim is to provide suitable opportunities for personal and professional growth. We work on the quality of our network and on finding the best possible match of student and internship at each stage of a study. We also actively help in the step from graduation to the job market. We consciously and explicitly aim to combat discrimination in all contact. We also keep a close eye on whether our students feel safe during an internship or job as a trainee. If we notice that not everyone is welcome at an employer, we will not work with them.

With our Fast Forward Traineeship Programme, we retain talent in the region by matching recent graduates with small and medium-sized businesses in Central and Eastern Netherlands. In doing so Saxion helps increase the strength of the region and these graduate talents get their careers off to a flying start.

Lifelong learning and talent development



Developing talent for a changing world

Saxion works on creating talent for the future with all its students. And these are increasingly students from all age groups, as the need for lifelong learning has never been greater. We cater to the needs of the tight regional labour market by providing a wide range of associate degrees, bachelor's, master's and part-time programmes for professionals who want to continue their development. We give all these students a solid foundation of professional knowledge and skills that are essential for their professionalism in a changing world. A world in which, among other things, digitalisation and artificial intelligence are playing an increasing role in more existing and new professions and provide opportunities for careers and entrepreneurship. In addition, sustainability can no longer be seen as a separate topic, which is why we are embedding this in all programmes in the coming years with clear objectives.

Together with regional businesses, we provide students with the chance to tackle problems from the professional field as well as assignments aimed at creating a sustainable, digital and safe society. They learn their profession in the real world and develop the broad skills needed to successfully work in that world.

Focusing on regional needs

We are expanding our range of study programmes in order to match the profile of each area in our region. This means an emphasis on technology in Enschede and security and digitalisation in Apeldoorn. In Deventer we are putting more focus on sustainability, circularity and urban studies. The professional landscape in Apeldoorn demands a greater range of education. This will grow into a third, fully-fledged Saxion location in the coming years. In addition, we want to increase the progression of bachelor's students to our master's programmes.



Beyond regional borders

The challenges facing society and that later may also be the focus of our students' careers, are occurring worldwide in a constantly changing dynamic and at all levels. What is taking place regionally, nationally, in Europe, globally or in the relationship between regional businesses and their partners in a specific area or country? For example, we are working on security and economic development within the EU, while climate and energy are more global themes. Saxion wants students to find the best possible connection between their own development and the field in which they will be applying their knowledge and skills. Developing intercultural cooperation skills helps students to successfully contribute to international collaborations and solve societal challenges such as sustainability. Those who develop this international orientation early on will later find more possibilities and opportunities in that growing playing field.

This is why Saxion will continue to work on creating added value for the region in the coming years through international orientation in education and more international collaboration in research. We are working at European level together with the other participants in the European universities initiative E³UDRES². This offers opportunities for student and lecturer development. This not only works as a stimulus to the quality of Saxion's education and research, but means that we also contribute to the ambition to further shape the free educational space within Europe. We are developing English-taught pathways for bachelor's programmes focusing on more internationally oriented sectors and those with a shortage of employees. In this way, we are increasing regional opportunities to attract and retain talent. Since we know that the Dutch language is indispensable for working effectively in the regional business community, we at Saxion are building a language bridge by also teaching the Dutch language to international students.

Education that crosses the boundaries of disciplines

Saxion gives each student a solid foundation in their own discipline. In addition, interdisciplinary work is a growing factor in success. The complexity of societal challenges such as climate change and the growing commitment and reliance on technology to find solutions requires professionals who are able to work with partners from all fields of knowledge. We want students to experience and learn that during their studies. This is why Saxion is and remains, a pioneer in providing interdisciplinary education that prepares students for dealing with complex issues. This type of education is challenging and requires a smart composition of project teams, new supervision and assessment techniques. Our aim is to be one of the best applied universities in the Netherlands in this field, through recognising and solving problems with the help of all those who can contribute.

A stronger link between education and research

We will make better use of our applied research to further improve the quality of our education. We will do this by connecting research and education more closely through addressing topical issues from practice. Students will benefit directly from new insights and innovations in their future field by being connected to that field through our research themes, field labs, innovation hubs, learning communities and innovative projects.





Digitalisation

It is important that students learn how to use digitalisation responsibly in their future professions, by both taking advantage of the opportunities and managing the risks. We are repeatedly adapting our education and exams to take account of technological developments such as artificial intelligence. We are ensuring that our learning environment fosters innovation and the professionalisation of lecturers in this area and is closely aligned with national innovation programmes such as Npuls, to give new developments a worthy place in our education. We are making a societal contribution to the healthy embedding of new technology in society. We do this by introducing our students to methods to safeguard public values such as autonomy, humanity and justice when applying new technology.

Experience with dual programmes

We see that the labour market is changing rapidly and with it the need of students and employers for more flexibility to combine working and learning. To facilitate this, we are going to gain experience by having a number of dual work-study programmes in sectors where there is a demand for this. This may lead to a Saxion-wide ambition and strategy for developing a diverse range of dual programmes.

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is now the norm for professionals. Ageing, population decline and labour market shortages make it crucial that every talent finds its place. The demand for part-time studies is growing in our region. Workers and jobseekers want to up their skills, retrain for another profession or take a part-time study to achieve a higher level of education and improve their career. Social transitions, innovations and ambitions all serve to further this growth. Saxion will meet this demand by providing more short courses, bachelor's and post-graduate applied study programmes. We will ensure that our schools and services work closely to facilitate this growth. We will make these courses as efficient as possible by means of flexible and modular part-time programmes allowing as many people as possible to take the next step in their careers via Saxion. Through good coordination with businesses and local authorities, we will help improve the connection between the working population and the needs of regional employers to cope with a decreasing working population.

Working together with educational partners in the region

We see the task of educating and training the new generation for its societal role as a shared task of all educational institutions. As an applied university, we also function as a bridge between secondary vocational education and academic education. We aim to strengthen our ties with educational institutions in our surrounding area and explore opportunities to work more intensively with them. We will consult with secondary education to improve skills in numeracy and language. In this way, we want to help prevent shortcomings in the development of young people that can hinder them moving forward in their chosen studies and careers.

More impact through innovation

Living Technology as centrepiece

Applied research at Saxion has an immediate impact on society since it seamlessly fits with current changes taking place in technology, health, economy and the environment. Developments are rapid which is why we have opted for a proactive approach to our research capacity: we pick up on the first signs of what is happening in the market and society and anticipate what is needed in the various transitions. Just as in education, we will also be integrating sustainability into all research groups at Saxion in the coming years.

We will continue to build on our research key priorities, with Living Technology as centrepiece, the interaction between people and technology. This enables us to have a stronger connection with the ambitions and development directions of social institutions and regional small and medium-sized enterprises.

We have an interdisciplinary approach to our research, which aligns well with international, national and regional knowledge agendas as well as Saxion's range of educational programmes. The five key priorities for our research are: 1) circular innovation & energy transition, 2) health, welfare & technology, 3) social & economic innovation, 4) key technologies and 5) security & digitalisation.



Impact through growth

We are committed to ambitious growth in our research activities, so that these will make up approximately one fifth of Saxion's activities by 2030. Our applied research with its strong focus on making a tangible contribution to society, will grow both in terms of scope and impact. As university of applied sciences serving the region, we see that our applied research generates practical knowledge that contributes to the success of social transitions. The growth of research at Saxion is also taking place at international level. Internationalisation impacts the region and also provides opportunities for cooperation to resolve societal issues. We are strengthening our position in Europe through our international collaborations, networks and partnerships. This also helps us create more opportunities for international education, research and cooperation with businesses.

Impact through connecting research and education

We are actively integrating our research results into study programme curricula. This makes our education more relevant to the region and ensures that Saxion contributes to innovation in professional practice as well as the sustainable development goals. We want all schools to be linked with one or more research groups. We will intensify our communication on research, for example by publishing research results more regularly and organising network events more frequently. By sharing our knowledge more actively, we will make a more effective contribution to a sustainable, digital and safe regional society.

We are also developing the link between research and education in our permanent partnerships. By entering into long term and structural cooperation with partners such as University of Twente, ROC Twente and Aventus, we will be more strongly connected to regional developments. With three locations in Central and Eastern Netherlands we will contribute to a strong regional profile, for example with the security profile in Apeldoorn thanks to our role in the Centre for Security and Digitalisation.



Impact through smart funding

To increase our impact in the region and with businesses and organisations, we are seeking balanced funding for our research at a regional, national and international level. We are doing this by actively participating in both national and international knowledge networks. We are continuing with the expansion of our Centres of Expertise, collaborative partnerships with the business community and applied universities that directly link our research to practice. We are ensuring that the work of our students, researchers and lecturers in these Centres of Expertise aligns with our five key priorities.

We want to expand our international collaborations, particularly in Europe. We plan to be more active in European networks and participate in European funded programmes to increase our impact. We are going to make greater use of European funding opportunities. To this end, we are exploring the options together with businesses and educational and other institutions in our region. Furthermore, we will be attracting researchers with a strong international network, provide good support for grant applications and strengthen our lobbying activities in this area.

Becoming a professional research organisation

Saxion's ambition to increase research growth also requires it to strengthen its own organisation. To deliver what we promise, we need to be a professional research organisation. Thus, the support and facilities needed for research need to keep pace with this. We are working on this as we speak. We want to create robust research groups that have a sustainable and lasting impact. We will introduce research group policy that makes it clear what conditions a research group must meet to start and grow. We will also ensure that the necessary facilities, such as laboratories, keep pace with their capabilities and quality.



Direct to the region

Regional entrepreneurial hotbed

We are investing in entrepreneurship to contribute to a strong regional society. When students, staff and former students develop their business ideas, it leads to more jobs and new businesses. Our Centre for Entrepreneurship helps connect the regional economy with Saxion and in doing so finds partners for our study programmes and research projects. Our students, our education and our research will help make Saxion a hotbed and rich source of young entrepreneurship in the coming years. We will be further embedding sustainability in all our entrepreneurial efforts in the coming years. In learning communities and innovation hubs, we offer students the opportunity to tackle current societal challenges in collaboration with local government and businesses.

Connecting students, research and market

To gain more practical experience, we are seeking collaborations with technology companies and social enterprises. We are also ensuring that we are more visible and available for small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. We are gathering early insights into market trends and linking these to our educational innovations. We are teaching students how to turn their ideas into real businesses. To do this we are providing support through practical programmes,

workspaces, and a network of experienced entrepreneurs. To help get our start-ups access to growth financing, we are focusing strongly on optimally utilising available funds and investors. In our incubators, student entrepreneurs will work on their businesses, develop innovations, and get their products and services into the market place. We will train them to be employers, enabling them to create new businesses that innovate and help strengthen the region. There will be special attention for impactful and social entrepreneurs.



Enterprising ambitions through research

We provide support to Saxion researchers who want to start or further develop a business. This results in start-ups and scale-ups where we can foster the application of our research in practice and strengthen the development of talent for the region. We are increasing the impact Saxion has on society by collecting specific research questions from businesses. Students, researchers, and businesses work jointly on these questions together with our research groups and in our innovation hubs, field labs, and learning communities.



Talent in motion

Our staff are our foundation

Our lecturers, researchers and support staff are the foundation of Saxion's success. We want to attract and retain talented people by offering them attractive positions and plenty of development opportunities. Coming to work at Saxion should be the start of a wonderful, dynamic time with achievements that earn appreciation from students, the regional professional field and the organisation. Whether you want to broaden your horizons, aspire to become a manager, or rather a specialist with knowledge and experience, or want to contribute to furthering expertise: we want to do all we can to help our employees enjoy contributing to developing the talents of a new generation of professionals for years to come.

Continue to invest in talent

We work in an organisation that has to continuously respond to changes. We are now facing a challenge due to declining student numbers and a tight labour market. We need to adapt our organisation and operations while remaining attractive as an employer. This is why we continue to invest within Saxion in knowledge, facilities and the skills needed for tomorrow. Lifelong learning, which is our educational focus, also applies to all employees in our own organisation. This also helps us attract and retain new talent.

Inclusion and diversity

Saxion wants to be an organisation where everyone counts, can be themselves, feels at home and where everyone experiences that. This applies to students, staff and also to our associates and partners. Our organisation is still insufficiently representative of society. We are going to change this. We look at diversity as a broad concept, including diversity in gender, talent, origin and background. Working with people who differ, know each other and understand each other: all this lays the foundation for an open attitude and uniting behaviour. This is what society can expect from us and what our employees pass on to our students.

Attention for well-being and personal safety

We want to improve the working atmosphere at Saxion where necessary. We aim to have close-knit teams where you are heard and supported, especially in situations and at times when we want to deliver quality together under high pressure. This way we create a working environment in which every employee experiences pleasure and satisfaction in their work. This is important for personal well-being and that benefits our education and research. Together we are creating a pleasant working environment in which we greet both acquaintances and strangers, we 'see' each other and are easy to approach both staff and students. Saxion has to be an organisation where everyone feels safe, where people study and work with respect for one another.

A result-oriented, professional culture

Saxion aims to become a more result-oriented, professional organisation while maintaining a culture of personal contact. To help realise our strategic ambitions we are taking a critical look at how we manage and collaborate in order to achieve results. Our goal is to increase the well-being and professionalism of everyone at Saxion. We are convinced that we can achieve this

professional cultural growth by being open to new ways of working, styles and attitudes. We don't want to turn this into a project, but rather just get on and do it: we discuss matters, make clear agreements, give and take responsibility and are open to feedback. We will 'practise' this together and organise custom support for teams that want a helping hand. We aim for a result-oriented, professional culture where the commitment that students and staff feel, remains intact.



Making do with less space

At Saxion we want to have an inspiring study and campus environment for students, an attractive working environment for employees and a modern ICT infrastructure and facilities suitable for teaching and research. Due to declining student numbers, we are reducing our property costs (m²) while investing in the quality of the physical, digital learning and working environments. Our campuses remain compact and easy

to reach at central locations in Enschede, Deventer and Apeldoorn. We are exploring opportunities for collaboration with other educational and research institutions and the professional field to make optimum use of our buildings. Everyone should feel at home in these vibrant and high-quality buildings so that students and staff can meet easily to collaborate and learn. We remain committed to making our organisation more sustainable in the coming years. We will do this by making our business operations circular and reducing our ecological footprint.

Continue to build despite less income

Saxion is financially sound and we want to keep it that way. This means we are entering a period of cutbacks, among other things to financially compensate for declining student numbers. Public policy and political choices in the coming years could lead to further financial challenges. We are carefully looking at where we can make savings and where we can cutback, we are doing this with due care and with attention to people. As long as basic funding from the government remains stable, we remain able to invest in the future and to do so using our own means. This fits with the growing scope being offered by Saxion and we want to invest substantially for example in the development of our range of education, part-time education and the location in Apeldoorn. We also want to maintain and further expand the funding of our research to enable our desired growth this area as well.

In the coming years, we will pay extra attention to the quality and efficiency of the support received by our education and research. This requires clear choices and decisions and clear agreements on performance. We will continue to monitor financial results and use our people and resources diligently.

True North

In Saxion's True North we describe our future objectives, clearly and in detail, and show our focus and strategy.

