

# “Together we make UGhent”

Guido and Sarah's programme: the main lines

Our university excels in both a Flemish and an international context. That is the merit of everyone in our academic community: it is the merit of our students as well as our staff. Under the motto “Together we make UGhent” both of us, Sarah and Guido, want to commit ourselves to create and support a university in which each one of us, whether man or woman, can build on their talents.

We think and dream of a university in which a free and open dialogue is possible and where walls between disciplines, departments and faculties are broken down. This is the vision we want to start from and want to expand. We can do that by combining our experience as dean and director of internationalisation and the perspective of a new generation of tenured staff. This programme elucidates and explains our ambitions:

## A. To shape our teaching with the help of our students

**Successful studies** are important to us. To increase the percentage of successful students we opt for activating teaching methods combining ex cathedra lecturing and teaching methods that rely on a fruitful execution of assignments. We want to commit ourselves to a professionalization of teachers and staff, more diverse ways to examine, adapted timetables and infrastructure. Choices require input from students.

Students are the main stakeholders involved in a rethinking and revising of **calendar**. A good calendar is flexible and takes into account the specificity of programmes, internships, the societal commitment of students. ...

## B. We focus on research and aspire for excellence

We commit ourselves to **personal talent**. Academics decide for themselves in which aspect of the profession they want to excel. Such an approach is facilitated by collaboration and evaluation at a team level. In such a way excellence is stimulated on an individual and on a group level.

Apart from the distribution of research funding on the basis of competitive research calls, **a basic research budget allocation** is considered.

## C. We invest in our staff

**We strive for an adequate position for research staff:** We are on the brink of establishing tenured post-doctoral positions that need not necessarily be thought of as pseudo-professorial positions. Research is more and more a team effort in which there is a need of a healthy mix of senior and junior researchers (pre-doc and postdoc level) who together can attract or coordinate research projects and can generate new ideas.

We want to reconsider the **work/life balance**. UGhent wants to contribute to a healthy work environment that takes its staff's private and family plans into account. UGhent wants to provide the necessary support and start initiatives that will facilitate the exchange of practical experience.

New **application and evaluation procedures** will be developed. This will demand a professional support by HR-specialists along the lines as set out for the recruiting of technical and administrative staff. There needs to be an in-house support system for the recruiting of ZAP, AAP and research collaborators so as make the procedure faster, more transparent and simpler.

**Evaluating personal talents** and the objectives associated with them is done today on the basis of individual responsibilities. We want to turn the development of talents into a collective responsibility.

## D. We stimulate internationalisation

The international policy needs to be continued and put in practice. Our university has to become an international centre that attracts top talent from everywhere in the world and collaborates in a structural way with complementary institutions. UGhent also believes in an enhanced investment in the south.

**Acquisition of international and intercultural skills:** students but also collaborators (and A&T-staff) need to be given every opportunity to become well informed citizens of the world. Funding for international exchange and intercultural education of students, PhD students, postdocs and all other researchers will continue to be increased. The free choice of the language in which one is taught (Dutch, English, French ...) is instrumental in realising those skills.

## E. We explore new organisational structures

A structure on the basis of faculties (for teaching matters) and interdisciplinary research institutions (for research) will be compared to the situation today and adapted along those lines.

**Adaptation of the allocation formula** will follow the functional organisation and stimulate internal and external collaboration.

**Necessary attention** needs to be given to structures as well as staff and, especially, the combination of university and clinical assignments when the UZ-Ghent is integrated in the UGhent.

## F. Striving for a positive and stimulating corporate policy

**Administrative simplification is a must.** Research and teaching assignments are the foremost tasks. Consequently the administrative load for professors and collaborators needs to be limited to an absolute minimum. We revise the organisation and allocation of administrative tasks between departments and the supportive central administration. We believe **in specialised services** assigned and adapted to the needs of each faculty.

Hurdles that hinder a correct gender and diversity balance will need to be addressed and abolished by focused and fair measures.

**Ethics and corporate policy:** Rector, vice-rector and the management team will go for a policy that leads **“by examples”, by “servant leadership” and “good practices”**. The new corporate government will endorse integrity, ethical principles, trust, transparency and open exchange of thought. Reciprocal respect, tolerance, and open dialogue are the keys to avoid polarisation and the promotion of harmonious cohabitation. Problems will be notified without stigmatising. Every form of unacceptable behaviour will be firmly addressed.

## G. We promote the university as an active participant in society

We opt for a university that takes part in the societal debates in a transparent and proactive way and does not avoid its responsibility. ZAP/AAP/postdocs/WP and students have the possibility and will be encouraged to assume tasks in society (such as politics, industry, social organisations) this will strengthen the links with our stakeholders and bring research closer to society.

We see UGhent as the motor for entrepreneurship with strong regional roots and an equally strong international profile. The relationship between teaching, research and academic service is strengthened. This will happen via the elaboration of a structural model for earning from entrepreneurial ventures.

UGhent continues its commitment to sustainability. It does not limit itself to models of consumption but also encompasses aspects such as working methods and parts of the infrastructure.

## H. Building a new management structure

First of all we want a **form of collaborative management team**. Vice-Chancellor and deputy vice-chancellor collaborate in a management team that makes use of the available expertise at UGhent. The basis should be the dialogue between all parties, after which a plan is set out. There is an absolute need to trust the competent bodies in order to engage in a forceful management. The participatory model remains key but needs to be applied in such a way that the ruling body can continue to function efficiently and forcefully. The model designed for the integration of the UZ forms a good basis to create a **new management structure** by 1 October 2018.