

## Integration programme for non-Dutch-speaking professorial staff

### 1 BACKGROUND

The Flemish statutory language requirements for teaching and academic staff are laid down in Art. II.270 of the Codex of Higher Education, which was amended on 1 October 2017 and states the following:

- Each member of the teaching staff or of the academic staff charged with a teaching assignment must master the language in which he or she teaches a course unit at CEFR level C1.
- A teaching staff member or an academic staff member **charged with a teaching assignment** who does not teach any course units in Dutch must be fluent in the Dutch language at CEFR level B2.
- The Executive Board provides for a **compulsory integration programme** which guarantees that the staff member will speak the Dutch language at least at CEFR **level A2 after 2 years** and at the required **B2 level within 5 years** after recruitment or at the time of his or her permanent appointment.

### 2 TOWARDS A COHERENT INTEGRATION PROGRAMME AT GHENT

Active recruitment of international professorial and postdoctoral staff was identified as one of the priorities in Ghent University's policy on internationalisation for the coming years.

#### 2.1 Language courses

**Ghent University offers financial support to its international professorial staff for taking Dutch courses at the University Language Centre.**

Through its **University Language Centre** (<https://www.ugent.be/lw/uct/en>), Ghent University offers a range of Dutch language courses at various levels. In order to achieve the required A2 CEFR level, 2 courses of 60 hours must be completed, while **5 courses of 60 hours** must be completed in order to obtain the **B2** CEFR level, which is the level required to comply with the administrative language acquisition requirements. These courses can be followed in daytime or evening classes, from October to December and from February to May. The **day** schedule includes 3 hours of lessons each day, 5 days a week, with new classes starting every month. If the work schedule does not allow any room to follow the day programme, it is also possible to take the same courses in an **evening** programme, in which 2.5-hour lessons are offered twice a week in the evening, supplemented with 10 hours of independent study per level. The evening courses are offered once per semester; thus, it takes a year to complete 2 courses and the B2 level can be obtained after 2.5 years.

The '**model trajectory**' currently being offered by the UCT provides for the 5 courses to be completed over a period of 13 months, with **levels 1 and 2** being followed in the **daytime** in a period of 2 months (from the end of July to the end of September), **level 3** in an **evening** class between October and December, and **level 4 and 5** again during the **day** in August and September. This proposed trajectory requires language acquisition to be **included in the professorial staff member's integration document**, in order to provide the time necessary to master the language.

**The language certificates (C1 level of English and B2 level of Dutch) are to be registered by the employee via Apollo.**

## Summary of currently available courses at UCT:

Level	Start date	End date	Schedule
<b>First Semester</b>			
<b>NVA1</b>	07/10/19	07/11/19	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	30/09/19	11/12/19	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	18/11/19	12/12/19	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	07/01/20	31/01/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
<b>NVA2</b>	07/10/19	07/11/19	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	30/09/19	11/12/19	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	18/11/19	12/12/19	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	07/01/20	31/01/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
<b>NVA3</b>	07/10/19	07/11/19	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	30/09/19	11/12/19	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	18/11/19	12/12/19	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	07/01/20	31/01/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
<b>NVA4</b>	07/10/19	07/11/19	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	01/10/19	10/12/19	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	18/11/19	12/12/19	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	07/01/20	31/01/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
<b>NVA5</b>	07/10/19	07/11/19	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	07/01/20	31/01/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
<b>Second Semester</b>			
<b>NVA1</b>	05/02/20	02/03/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	10/02/20	04/05/20	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	05/03/20	01/04/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	24/04/20	25/05/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	29/07/20	24/08/20	Mon-Fri, 13:00-16:00
	27/08/20	22/09/20	Mon-Fri, 13:00-16:00
<b>NVA2</b>	05/02/20	02/03/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	10/02/20	04/05/20	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	05/03/20	01/04/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	24/04/20	25/05/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	24/04/20	25/05/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	29/07/20	24/08/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
<b>NVA3</b>	05/02/20	02/03/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	10/02/20	04/05/20	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	05/03/20	01/04/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	24/04/20	25/05/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	29/07/20	24/08/20	Mon-Fri, 16:00-19:00
	27/08/20	22/09/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00

<b>NVA4</b>	05/02/20	02/03/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	11/02/20	05/05/20	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	05/03/20	01/04/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	24/04/20	25/05/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	29/07/20	24/08/20	Mon-Fri, 13:00-16:00
	27/08/20	22/09/20	Mon-Fri, 13:00-16:00
<b>NVA5</b>	10/02/20	04/05/20	Mon&Wedn or Tue&Thu 19:00-21:30
	05/03/20	01/04/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	24/04/20	25/05/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
	28/05/20	24/06/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-16:30
	28/07/20	21/08/20	Mon-Fri, 13:00-16:00
	25/08/20	18/09/20	Mon-Fri, 9:00-12:00
<b>NVA6</b>	29/07/20	24/08/20	Mon-Fri, 13:30-15:30

**Notes:**

- Orientation tests can be taken on Tuesday afternoons, after booking
- First semester evening courses are already fully booked
- Registration at the UCT can be done with Marijke Lenaerts
- The language courses at UCT are free of charge for the professorial staff, partners can enrol at UGent employee rate
- From September 2020, the level 4 & 5 day courses will be spread over 2 months, but will have additional digital exercises, in order to prepare better for ITNA test

No

## 2.2 Low Countries Studies

The Low Countries Studies programme at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy is a programme for students and researchers, consisting of **weekly evening lectures, from February to June**, on a wide range of topics such as language, art and culture, history, the media, the Flemish landscape, urban planning and daily customs in Flanders, which give international students and staff a better understanding of our society from an academic perspective. In addition to the lectures, a number of extra-curricular activities are offered, such as a guided city walk, a visit to the Ghent City Museum and an excursion to the Flemish countryside.

Details can be found on: <https://www.ugent.be/lw/lcs/en>

**International professorial staff members are encouraged to obtain the certificate of successful completion of the programme. The participation fee for the programme is € 234.**

## 2.3 Integration into the work environment

Ghent University offers a number of additional supporting measures to help international professors adapt to the Ghent University workplace and its research and teaching environment in a faster and more efficient way.

### 2.3.1 Information before arrival

The Ghent University website contains all practical information that international staff may need, before and upon arrival at Ghent University, during their stay and before departure. All information regarding the integration programme and the institutional support is bundled and provided to the future staff member immediately after approval of the appointment.

### 2.3.2 Welcome

Integration into the work environment starts with a proper welcome. This entails an *individual welcome* by the dean and the department chair, supported by the Department of Personnel and Organization, during which there is room to get acquainted and to exchange specific information. The new international employee receives an information package which includes updated legislation and regulations and information about language acquisition, as well as practical information about living and working in Ghent and assistance to obtain a residence permit.

In addition to the individual welcome at the workplace, several *receptions* are organized for new international employees throughout the year, which offer a networking opportunity.

### 2.3.3 Mentoring of professorial staff

The Career Office at the Department of Personnel and Organization started a pilot project in October 2017, in order to provide peer-to-peer (professor-to-professor) support with regard to the career development and the personal performance in a (new) professorial role at Ghent University, in particular in the role as manager and leader.

- Participation in the project is voluntary
- Mentors can be current professorial staff or recently retired professors, matched (preferably) outside of their own department, but within the same faculty in order to ensure familiarity with the functioning and organizational culture of the faculty within which they work.
- Four individual discussions between mentor and mentee, spread over one year
- Three meetings within the network of mentees (max. 15 mentees per group) aimed at exchanging experiences, broadening the gaze, finding answers to the same learning questions.

### 2.3.4 Basic teacher training

The Department of Educational Policy (DOWA) offers the existing basic teacher training in English to non-Dutch-speaking staff members. It consists of three full-day sessions led by an educational expert and is organized five to six times each academic year, and covers three main topics:

- how to **plan education and evaluation activities**, including learning to recognize the strong and weak elements in your educational approach as well as the most effective educational strategies, and getting acquainted with the Flemish (and European) regulations regarding the competencies to be pursued in university study programmes;
- how to **provide motivating educational activities**, including help with completing the course specifications in accordance with Ghent University's competency model, and with introducing interventions into the educational activities to hold the attention of students, create interaction and encourage students to actively participate; and
- how to **organize the evaluation**, including a critical review of the degree of validity, reliability and transparency of the examinations, which are then adjusted where necessary, as well as insight into the impact of the education and examination code on the daily teaching practices and the factors that affect the course evaluations by students.

## 2.4 Integration into the broader social context

In order to achieve a fully successful integration, it is important that the employee feels included in the wider **Ghent University community** outside of the immediate work environment. Ghent University regularly organizes institution-wide activities to bring international staff together. The university thus tries to establish an international community. In addition, Ghent University strives to fully involve international staff in its social activities by communicating bilingually (in Dutch and English) as much as possible.

Finally, the *role of the family* in the integration process must be recognized. Ghent University offers a broad range of facilities and services for the families of its staff, in particular of its international staff. For example, Ghent University has its own **childcare** facilities and offers financial support to international professors to enrol their children at **International School Ghent**. Another service offered as part of the comprehensive family care package is that the Welcoming Team of the Department of Personnel and Organization can facilitate the accompanying partner's search for employment by arranging an appointment with the **Flemish employment agency** (VDAB).

Moreover, Ghent University and the city of Ghent are close partners in the establishment of a broader *international community* in Ghent. Through '**Expatriate Community Ghent**'<sup>1</sup>, joint activities are organized for expats.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.internations.org/gent-expats>