

Introduction to MINT – Mapping Internationalisation

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This manual contains essential information that should be read before filling out the MINT questionnaire.

Should you have any further questions about the use of MINT after reading this introduction, please contact Nuffic at mint@nuffic.nl.

1. Before starting

1.1. What is MINT?

The tool, Mapping Internationalisation (MINT), aims to support higher education institutions and provide them with a complete overview of their internationalisation policy, activities and facilities. MINT combines a self-evaluation tool with a comparison and benchmarking tool.

The questionnaire consists of optional sections (components). The MINT filter (see 2.5) allows the tool to be tailored to the specific situation of the institution on the basis of the answers given to previous questions.

For more information on the background of the tool please check: www.nuffic.nl/mint.

1.2. Who is it for?

The tool is meant for higher education institutions. It can be used at several levels within an institution, both at the central and decentralised levels. The programme level is the lowest level. A central level can be any level above the programme level: for example a department, faculty, school or institution. See §2.3.

The results can be used to start a discussion at several levels (institutional, national, international) on internationalisation quality assurance as well as on harmonising objectives and activities.

By using this tool you are granting Nuffic your permission to use the data you provide to improve the MINT tool and/or other Nuffic services. Any data from MINT used by Nuffic in publications will be anonymised.

1.3. Why use it?

MINT can be filled out as a quick scan or in more detail. As such, it can provide basic data on the current state of affairs or an in-depth analysis which can then be used for setting an internationalisation policy.

The tool enables institutions to:

- obtain a complete overview of their activities and objectives;
- set a clear internationalisation profile;
- set an internationalisation policy and activities supported by this checklist;
- set an agenda for improvement;
- prepare for a visitation or for accreditation.

The tool is intended to provide:

- insight into the internationalisation goals and the activities of higher education institutions;
- information about the current status of internationalisation within the unit.

2. Filling out the questionnaire

2.1. Registering, logging in and scheduling

After registering for MINT through the web form, you will receive your password and log-in code which you will need to access the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be active for a given period of time during the year, typically from September to June:

- 1) You will be able to enter data into the tool from September until June. During this period you can fill out the questionnaire and view, save and print the completed questionnaire, self-evaluation and management summary.
- 2) During the first two weeks of June we will close the questionnaire to prepare the comparison and benchmark reports. During this period you will not be able to use the questionnaire or make changes. However, during this phase, you will still be able to view, download and print the completed questionnaire, self-evaluation and management summary.
- 3) From mid-June the comparison and benchmark reports will be available.

It is possible to fill out the tool as a test if you first want to check its relevance for your institution or programme. Please do make sure you fill out 'test' in the General Data section when asked for the institution's name. This will ensure that your data is not used in any benchmark.

2.2. Level of assessment

The MINT tool offers two questionnaires tailored to

1. central levels in the university (e.g. institution, faculty, school, department, academy, domain) and;
2. the lowest decentralised level being an educational programme.

It is important that you register for the correct level of the MINT tool as the log in will be applicable to either one of the levels – not to both. Please contact [Nuffic](#) if you also need access to the other part of the tool (see Help).

It is possible to get access to the tool on both levels and for multiple units or educational programmes. This does require multiple logins which can be requested through www.nuffic.nl/mint. Please use separate application forms for each unit or educational programme you would like to get a login for.

2.3. Who fills out the questionnaire?

In many cases the data will come from different sources. It is therefore likely that the person filling out the questionnaire will be the manager of the data collection process. Printing out the empty questionnaire in advance and determining who is able to provide the required data could be the first step in this process. Click on 'empty questionnaire' to get a preview of the complete set of questions.

2.4. Time investment

Filling out the tool takes at least one day per programme including the collection of relevant data. It may take considerably more time, depending on the intensity of the internationalisation activities and the accessibility of data. It is important to realise that a self-evaluation is time consuming for a good reason: it is a learning process. If you consider it as such you will probably find it time well spent rather than time lost.

Please note that there are also several possible shortcuts:

- a) Since this is a self-evaluation tool it consists mostly of optional questions. There are only a handful of questions that you *must* answer. These concern the general user data on the login page. If you want, you can choose to focus on just one or a few aspects of internationalisation rather than on all. This will allow you to go into depth on these aspects instead of having to go through all details to cover the full range.

- b) If you fill out the tool in the order in which the questions are presented, the tool's filter will ensure that you will only be asked questions that are relevant, based on your answers to previous questions. Filling out the first three parts will have an effect on which questions will be asked on key figures. A high number of positive answers are likely to lead to more questions and vice versa. (also see 2.5)

As MINT can be used to provide a unit with an overview of its developments over time (monitoring), it can be useful to complete the tool on a yearly basis. On opening a new questionnaire, the previous year's data (if available) will be copied automatically to the new questionnaire.

2.5. MINT filter

Questions on subjects that the user has marked irrelevant, are made invisible. This happens when certain filter questions are answered. Subsequent questions, that dig deeper into a specific subject, will only be asked for subjects that have been indicated as relevant.

This will make the questionnaire considerably shorter for some users and therefore easier to use. This routing only works if a user fills out the questionnaire in the correct order, starting from the beginning. If no filter questions are completed, then all subsequent questions will be visible.

If the filter questions are completed *after* the subsequent sections have been filled out, there is a risk that the answers to the subsequent questions will disappear and not be included in any report, if the filter questions are answered incorrectly. An example would be if the user marks certain subjects as irrelevant, even though activities in this area do take place and details on these activities have already been provided in later sections of the questionnaire. Often this is a sign that policy and implementation are not well-aligned.

2.6. What data do I need?

The questions are divided into six chapters:

- Policy and goals
- Activities
- Services
- Key figures
- Output
- Outcomes

If you want a complete picture, you will need to answer all questions so that an in-depth analysis can be made to map the relationship between

1. goals pursued;
2. activities undertaken;
3. services offered
4. output created
5. outcomes obtained

Click on 'empty questionnaire' to get a preview of the complete set of questions.

Internationalisation goals can be achieved through a great variety of activities, some of which serve several goals. For example, offering programmes taught in other languages can both attract more international students (goal: continuity) and facilitate student exchange (goal: development of international & intercultural competencies of students). This example also shows that some activities are in fact also prerequisites for other activities. In addition the unit will have to organise certain facilities as support structures for internationalisation.

An in-depth analysis provides the unit with insight into which activity or activities serve(s) which goal(s) and which services are available to support these activities. Apart from relating goals, activities and

services, each section of the questionnaire includes questions on the plan-do-check-act cycle to provide insight into the strengths and weaknesses in the unit's quality assurance.

Another option is to fill out the questionnaire selectively to facilitate a quick scan. For a quick scan, you will at least need to indicate what you do: which activities and which services. In the 'key figures' section, you will only get questions that relate to the activities and services you have selected. Note: even if you only complete part of the questionnaire, please ensure that the information you do enter is correct and complete.

In some cases you may not be able to answer all questions at once as you might need data from other departments. It is always possible to save the data you have entered and return to it later. Alternatively, you could print out the empty questionnaire before you start in order to see which data you will need.

2.7. Use of definitions in the tool

Data asked for in the key figures section of MINT are generally subject to several interpretations. It is not possible to define each key figure in one generally accepted way. That is the nature of internationalisation of higher education. For example, 'international experience' for students: does that include social *and* academic aspects or only one or the other? Do we define 'study abroad' as a summer school for one week or a full semester? Should 'international students' be distinguished by their nationality or by the country they had their previous education in? Are PhD students considered students, or do you regard them as employees of a university?

If you intend to carry out a comparison or benchmark exercise it is especially important that you agree with your partner(s) on a common set of definitions of generic terms.

2.8. Practical instructions

1. Click on 'empty questionnaire' to get a preview of the complete set of questions.
If you want to start entering data click on 'Fill out questionnaire' under the 'Questionnaire' option in the main menu.
2. When you log in a second time after filling out part of the questionnaire you are directed to the last page you filled out before you logged out.
3. Explanations and definitions can be found in the questionnaire by placing your cursor over the blue i's.
4. Your data will automatically be saved each time you go to the next page of the questionnaire.
5. As the questionnaire automatically tailors itself depending on the answers given to previous questions, the numbering of the questions as well as the items within the questions (a, b, c, etc) may not seem complete or logical. However, because of the filter (see 2.5), this is as it is meant to be and is no reason for concern.
6. Only answer a question with 'Yes' if you can do so without hesitation – without 'ifs or buts'. Completing this tool involves a learning process, the aim of which is to gain insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the internationalisation of your unit. The information generated by completing this tool can be used to boost professionalisation. It is therefore in your best interests to answer all the questions as honestly as possible.
7. Answer the questions in the correct order. This will allow the questionnaire to be automatically tailored to your unit's specific circumstances based on your answers to subsequent questions. See also the text about the filter (2.5). It is possible to skip questions. However, we recommend that you do not skip the first three questions of each section, to ensure you leave the structure of the questionnaire intact.
8. If you are planning to use the tool as a comparison or benchmark instrument, you should make sure your counterparts enter the same type of data at the same level. You are advised to contact your counterparts before filling out the questionnaires regarding, for example, the dates to which the data refer. It is especially important when filling out the key figures section

to agree with your partner(s) on a common set of definitions of generic terms (such as 'international student', 'incoming student', 'staff', etc.). See also 2.7: Use of definitions in the tool.

9. Your input is saved upon pressing the 'next' button on a page. You can leave the questionnaire (before completing it) at any stage and continue at any time (making changes or adding data) until the end of May. The tool will then reopen again for a new season of data entry in September. We will remind you of these dates in due time by email.

2. After completing the questionnaire

The data you entered will be stored in the MINT database. The data will be used to make comparison reports if you request them and/or to make benchmark reports (see below, under 3.1). Furthermore, Nuffic will use information from the database to improve the MINT tool and other Nuffic services. Any data used in publications will be made anonymous.

3.1. Options offered by the tool

1. Viewing, saving, exporting (to Word) or printing the filled out questionnaire.
2. Viewing, saving, exporting (to Word) or printing the:
 - a. Self-evaluation report.
 - b. Management summary.
 - c. Comparison report with other programmes or units (internal and external). Submitting the questionnaire will allow you to make a comparison with one partner of your choice. The permission form to indicate your interest in a comparison will become available a few weeks after the tool has been closed. You will be informed by email.
 - d. Benchmark report: a comparison with the average of similar programmes or units if there is a minimum of five similar programmes or units taking part in MINT which have submitted data on a number of identical questions.

Data is visible directly in the comprehensive self-evaluation report and in the management summary. These are automatically generated and shown under the 'reports' menu item in the tool. Should you also want to have a comparison or benchmark report, you will be given the opportunity to generate this in June. This is linked to a specific point in time because these reports can only be prepared once users have entered sufficient data.

Examples of reports are available on the MINT website.

3.1.1. Self-evaluation report

The self-evaluation report shows all the data you entered in a logical format including graphs and tables. The management summary shows you the highlights of the data you entered focusing on internationalisation policy and quality assurance.

3.1.2. Comparison report

In a comparison report you will be able to compare yourself to a similar programme or institution/faculty. In June Nuffic releases a list of users to allow all users to find comparison partners. If you want to be sure you have a comparison partner, we advise you to directly contact the programme or institution/faculty you wish to compare yourself to. Nuffic cannot release user names any earlier because we need to give MINT users the opportunity to enter data in their own time and at their own pace. It is of course best if you choose your comparison partners before filling out the questionnaire, because you then can agree upon definitions used. This will allow you to compare yourself successfully. Define what you yourself mean by 'international', 'experience', or 'PhD students'. We recommend that you contact your partners as early as possible to agree upon this.

Criteria used to determine whether a user should be included in a benchmark or not:

- equal period of time for which data are retrieved

- at least two of the three main categories of questions (goals, activities, support) should be answered for at least 66%.
- type of institution (WO/HBO)

Additional criteria can be:

- level of the programme BA/MA
- goal(s) of internationalisation

See also 2.7: Use of definitions in the tool.

3.1.3. Benchmark report

Finally, a benchmark report allows you to compare your own data to the average of a group of users who share certain characteristics e.g. the average of all universities of applied sciences or of all faculties of sociology. Depending on the number of users, one or more benchmark groups may be made available for comparison. A benchmark group will consist of at least five users to ensure data anonymity. Tips on carrying out a benchmark are available on the MINT website under the heading 'Use of MINT'. If there are a minimum of five institutions or programmes of the same kind, an anonymous benchmark will automatically be added to the MINT reports.

Because of the expected difference in the use of definitions, the benchmark might contain one or more 'grey' areas. Nevertheless, the benchmark can provide interesting information. See also 2.7: Use of definitions in the tool.

To prevent pollution of the database three measures are taken:

- When users enter test data they are requested to fill out 'test' in the general data form, when asked for their institution's name. These cases will then not be included in comparison or benchmark reports.
- At least two of the three main categories of questions (goals, activities, support) should be answered for at least 66%.
- A final check is done using a special software tool.

3.1.4. Practical instructions

How to add gridlines to reports in Word:

1. Open the report in Word.
2. Click on one of the tables.
3. Click in the menu on 'Layout'.
4. Click in the menu on the icon 'View gridlines'.

3.2. Use of results within your organisation

Within institutions, the results of MINT can be used to:

- get a complete overview of their activities and objectives;
- set a clear internationalisation profile;
- develop an internationalisation policy and activities supported by this checklist;
- set an agenda for improvement;
- prepare for a visitation or for accreditation.

As such, the results of MINT will provide input for policy-based and strategic choices in internationalisation.

The tool can also be used to start a discussion at several levels (institutional, national, international) on internationalisation quality assurance as well as on harmonising objectives and activities. It is up to the users to determine which approach is preferred for analysing the results. The tool offers insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the unit's quality assurance. The unit will subsequently have to

draw its own conclusions on possible areas for improvement.

MINT provides insight into the degree of quality assurance that takes place at the level of individual activities and services. However, the results of MINT could also be used to determine the completeness of the PDCA cycle: Plan (= Goals), Do (= Activities & Facilities), Check (= Key figures and outcomes). This can be done for the entire internationalisation of the unit or programme.

Additionally, MINT will allow you to make a comparison with one partner of your choice or with a benchmark, whereby a comparison is made with the average of similar programmes or units.

3.3. Nuffic services

Nuffic offers various services after using the MINT tool:

- A Nuffic workshop on how to use the results of this self-evaluation. Contact Adinda van Gaalen or Hendrik Jan Hobbes via mint@nuffic.nl for more information.
- A Nuffic course. Check course content and available data at www.nuffic.nl
- Nuffic's consultancy services for specific advice on how to internationalise your programme, faculty or institute. Contact Adinda van Gaalen or Hendrik Jan Hobbes via mint@nuffic.nl for more information.

3. What does the tool not offer?

- direct solutions or answers to specific questions;
- future scenarios;
- the option of including results from for instance student evaluations;
- the option of filling out more than one 'other' answer;
- questions on the suitability of partners for the programme. It does include questions on what activities the partnerships support and what the importance of the partner network is. Other tools are being developed which will provide the option of searching institutions based on their profile. An example of this is U-map.