

Erasmus Policy Statement

This policy statement forms part the University's application for the Erasmus University Charter for the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2020.

Internationalisation is integral to the University of Sussex & is a central theme running throughout the University's Strategic plan to be signed off by Senate & Council in Autumn 2013. The University has three broad international strategies. The International recruitment strategy was ratified by Council in March 2011, and most recently the international partnership strategy was signed off in January 2013. An internationalisation strategy is being developed to provide a road map for internationalisation and to support delivery of the University's strategic plan 2013 – 2020.

a) How partners are chosen

Potential partners are selected using a number of criterion & sources of information. These include:

- a. rankings in various international ranking systems, including the Times Higher world rankings, QS world rankings, Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Academic Rankings of World Universities;
- b. research synergies between the University and a proposed partner;
- c. standing of the possible partner within their own country;
- d. strategic alignment or fit;
- e. overlap in academic profile with the University of Sussex;
- f. recruitment potential;
- g. advantages in terms of an overseas experience for Sussex students.

We are resourcing this through the creation of the Sussex International Partnership Fund (SIP Fund), which will support international partnership activity, providing a stepped increase in resource rising to 2015/16. The fund will proactively support the development of staff & student mobility including, post-doctoral and postgraduate research student exchange & the promotion of Summer School exchange opportunities.

b) In which geographical areas will partners be located?

The Sussex International partnerships strategy is ambitious in its aims, seeking to develop as many as ten strategic international partnerships by 2020 across five regions: Europe, Africa & the Middle East, East Asia, South Asia and North America.

c) Key objectives & target groups of mobility

The University's international strategy aims to increase exposure of collaborative research settings and cross-European networks to undergraduate students in three ways:

- i) The University will seek to significantly enhance the number of undergraduate students who experience mobility within and outside of Europe during their undergraduate programme of study.
- ii) The strategy will seek to develop opportunities for undergraduate students from overseas partner institutions to experience working in a research group at Sussex. This will be reciprocated with appropriately qualified Sussex students travelling overseas for a research placement as part of their studies.
- iii) The University's international strategy will be promoted via the University's schools & colleges outreach programme, encouraging under-represented groups and non-

traditional learners to consider not only an application to Sussex, but participation in ERASMUS programmes.

A second key facet of the University's international strategy is ensuring positive employability outcomes for our graduating students. To ensure that our courses remain relevant to our students wishing to work within the EU and beyond, the international strategy dovetails with the University's teaching and learning strategy in supporting:

- i) The development of new courses more closely aligned with the needs of employers & a skills-based economy whilst taking into account our academic strengths
- ii) Developing innovation in the curriculum including the development of e-learning/blended learning courses for both undergraduates & graduate students
- iii) Systematic opportunities for our academic and administrative staff to spend time in Europe through the ERASMUS framework

Innovation in the curriculum

Although a strong supporter of the Erasmus student mobility programme & staff mobility programme, the University has not previously engaged in developing double degrees under the Erasmus Mundus scheme, nor does it have non-Erasmus Mundus double degrees. However, Sussex is actively exploring how it might engage in offering dual degrees via Erasmus Mundus & is currently in the process of a review. Staff from the University's Academic Services team have attended recent Erasmus Mundus briefing sessions and good practice is being explored, with a view to supporting applications in the next round. The University has recently appointed a new International Partnerships lead who will work closely with the University Partnership Office & International Office in explaining the process for the development of double degrees. Concurrent with this process, an International Partnerships handbook will be signed off by Autumn 2013 which will set out in clear terms how academics engage in double degrees. A communication campaign promoting the international partnerships strategy & opportunities for academic Schools to engage in international cooperation will begin in Autumn 2013.

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The University is currently finalising its Strategic Plan and an internationalisation strategy to underpin that plan and embed internationalisation.

Through to 2020, the University will continue to ensure that administrative and faculty staff have the opportunity to participate in international networks in order to increase their own professional, social and intercultural skills, learn from good practice overseas, internationalise the curriculum and strengthen international partnerships on several levels. This ties in with the International Partnership Strategy which will encourage academics to develop new partnerships, or enhance current cooperation with partners and will provide templates for departments to use when considering new partnership and projects. The International Cooperation Projects under the Programme will be considered as key opportunities which will facilitate these partnerships. Staff will be encouraged to apply for these with the International Office offering support for application processes, advice on resourcing and financial and reporting management.

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Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates & researchers Europe needs

Erasmus mobility & language learning, will be promoted through our School outreach programme to under-represented groups. The University will promote the Programme's student loan guarantee facility which will complement our own recent commitment to provide significant scholarship funding for study at Masters and Doctoral level.

Our strategic plan seeks to develop high calibre graduate level researchers to build long term collaborations with international partners. We will seek through Actions 1 & 2, ways to enable & resource innovation with international partners & enterprises, & ensure that innovation ensuing from such strategic alliances is accessible & recognised by institutional reward.

Improving the quality & relevance of higher education

The University aims to provide research skills at all learning levels to inform students' careers in business, academic, industry, social & ethical enterprise. Mobility of research students & staff will inform this teaching through best practice & knowledge exchange.

The University has recently invested in our Careers Centre to address curricular & extra-curricular work experience, including internships and volunteering. Erasmus will provide a framework to ensure academic recognition & will facilitate links with local & global businesses through Sector Skills Alliances.

Our curriculum modernisation strategy seeks to maintain an academic portfolio based on innovative design & an internationalised academic community. This will include the development of dual degrees & jointly taught modules.

Strengthening quality through mobility & cross-border cooperation

We aim to increase the international engagement of students by enabling greater student mobility, with a target of 5% by 2018.

Through strategic international partnerships & capacity building with third countries, departments will be encouraged to develop networks & strengthen existing partnerships. This will include ensuring academic quality & recognition of exchange schemes and enable staff to achieve their own ambitions. This will also facilitate the Visiting Fellows scheme which is planned to welcome & maximise best use of visiting fellowships, encouraging participation in teaching & research developments.

Linking higher education, research & business for excellence & regional Development

Our vision is to be of a scale to sustain our academic endeavour for the future & translate knowledge & research for local & global benefit. We will look to Action 2 to explore how, via our award-winning Innovation Centre for example, we can continue to develop & benefit from synergies between HE, research & business.

Improving governance & funding

The University will grow the financial security of the institution by ensuring a diverse student body, a robust framework of international partnerships & diversifying our funding research sources.