

ERASMUS+ POLICY STATEMENT 2021-2027

University West intends to participate in the Erasmus+ programme to its full extent and thereby actively contribute to the European Integration and specifically the goals in the European Education Area as the programme has a leading position to facilitate the University strategic goals for internationalisation.

The University strategy for internationalisation is titled: Internationalisation - a base for creating knowledge in collaboration. It is a five-year strategy (2019) with a yearly update function built in. And it aims to develop internationalisation for the whole institution with consideration for sustainability and the environment.

At University West we want every student and employee to consciously reflect about, and able to function in a globalised world. The internationalisation strategy sets a direction for this ambition as it is covering strategies for collaboration, inclusion, mobility, and recruitment with a focus on modernisation through concepts like 'Virtual mobility', 'Digitalisation', 'Internationalisation at home' and 'Integrated internationalisation'.

It ensures that new environmentally friendly practices will be implemented at the start of the new programme. All students and staff will be advised to choose way of travel taking the environment in consideration. There will be a benefit system in place to support this. All outcomes in form of events such as conferences, seminars, recruitment, or information activities will be considered from an environmental perspective and arranged accordingly.

And that by recently implemented rules and revised processes all participants are guaranteed a fair and transparent application process and participation in mobility activities. A close collaboration with the University team for inequality and disability support where information and early alerts helps to ensure non-discriminatory treatment for everybody.

Further it is established that Internationalisation is a highly ranked aspect that adds quality to both the study programmes and the applied research. And that University West ensures full implementation of the ECTS rules as the Erasmus+ programme provides opportunities for high quality mobility of students and staff which is automatically recognised after completion.

The overall goals of the strategy are conceptualized in four areas: a) A creative and inclusive learning environment b) Education with broad perspectives c) Research that meets complex challenges d) Management for development and operational support with international competence.

The responsibility to implement the Erasmus+ programme is recognised by the University management and has therefore established a Council for Strategic Internationalisation and an International Office to facilitate operational support.

It is however decided that the internationalisation strategy is concretised in the operational and planning work of all the academic departments. There are 4 departments subdivided by subject areas of Education. (Engineering, Health, Business, Economics and IT and Social and Behavioural studies)

This means that each department is responsible for breaking down, stimulating, concretising, and developing the internationalisation work based on the university's strategy. It is also an overarching principle that the departments are somewhat autonomous in HOW they choose to organise and participate in different internationalisation activities. This principle effects on how things are organised.

The cooperation with partner institutions for the purpose of mobility is important and can be described as two-dimensional. Firstly, a clear focus on academic subject related collaboration for the benefit of specific study programmes on departmental level and secondly institutional general collaboration for the benefit of the complete institution where the focus can be more on quality enhancement activities and modernisation for example.

To implement this a 'Key Partner' Concept is established by all departments where mobility on all levels (undergraduate, graduate and PhD) is driven by high intensity of staff mobility to ensure good quality in all activities.

In practice this means that the international office has a more active supporting role in implementing the Mobility focused activities (KA1) and a more consulting role in the collaborative focused activities (KA2 and 3).

For all Key Action 1 activities the processes connected to the Erasmus Student Card initiative will be implemented to a full extent from 2021. It is being tested on one department in the autumn 2020 to align the processes with the mobility database system in use.

For Key Action 2 activities the Council for strategic internationalisation will put a lot of effort on the Partnership for excellence European University Initiative which is of relevance for the whole institution. It is expected that we apply for this in 2021 or 2022. The academic profile of the University is: Work Integrated Learning. We conduct education in collaboration with working life and the students are exposed to practical elements throughout their studies in various forms. It is therefore in this area the European University application will be submitted.

The other activities in the KA2 portfolio are more academically subject related, and peer driven. Each Department can apply and participate as they see fit. The Grants and Innovation Office is responsible for the administrative support and monitoring of the activities in this Key action. This organisational setup allows International Office to focus on the activities related to Mobility. The Grants and Innovation Office is focused on administrative support for all other funding (research etc.) and it is expected that this will increase the number of applications in key action 2 activities when the academics involved get the support they are more used to in other types of funding applications.

For Key Action 3 projects there is no concrete plan at this stage but the University has a strong focus on Work Integrated Learning, it is the profile of the institution and we issued by the Swedish Government to develop academic methods as well as do research in this area. And it is advisable to have the opportunity to participate in a Key Action 3 project should it emerge.