

Erasmus+ Policy Statement (EPS) – Paderborn University

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the goal of building a European Education Area¹ and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Internationalisation at Paderborn University (UPB) is seen as an inherent part of all functions of the University. The University's approach towards internationalisation is thus a holistic one and involves students, faculty, administration and central facilities. The promotion of international mobility, the internationalisation of teaching combined with targeted international recruitment of students, researchers and staff are fundamental principles of the University's general strategy. All these processes are fostered by our participation in the Erasmus+ programme.

UPB has embarked on a structured development process with internationalisation being a main driver of the University's qualitative development. In addition to increasing mobility, UPB will focus on qualitative aspects during the next Erasmus+ period. Furthermore, many positive results already achieved need to be consolidated. In 2017, the permanent working group "Internationalisation and Digitalisation", consisting of leadership, faculty and administration, has been established. In an ongoing process, it is formulating our new internationalisation strategy for the 2020s, which will guide the University into the next decade. This strategy and hence the University's further internationalisation will be strongly influenced by the next Erasmus+ generation 2021-2027.

As one result of the structured development process, in 2020, the next University's development plan is going to be finalised. In this plan, internationalisation is identified as one of the University's key tasks for the upcoming years. Therefore, internationalisation is and will be an integral part of the University's policy. Accordingly, mobility and cooperation are central elements of UPB's institutional policy, mainly fostered by Erasmus+. A main goal of the University's development plan is to create a joint strategic approach for the future development of internationalisation that is supported by all stakeholders and based on a wide acceptance among all University members. Calling itself the "University for the Information Society", internationalisation is also particularly embedded in our digitalisation strategy, envisaging for instance the development of bi- and transnational digital teaching formats with cooperation partners, especially in collaboration with partners within the European University Initiative. We therefore appreciate the

¹ For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website: https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

digitalisation of the European Education Area pushed forward by the Erasmus+ programme and its processes in the upcoming years.

Objectives related to internationalisation as outlined in the development plan are a) the increased international visibility of Paderborn University, b) the enhanced internationalisation of teaching and learning and c) the intensified cooperation in the development of research, teaching and lifelong learning together with international partners.

UPB will use the Erasmus+ programme as a main tool to increase its international visibility within and outside of Europe. To broaden its partner base, Paderborn University participates in the Erasmus+ cooperation with partner countries (Key Action 107) and programme countries (Key Action 103). In order to intensify cooperation with organisations and institutions, it is our aim to support and initiate collaborations and partnerships within Key Action 2, such as Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices as well as cooperation within the European Universities Initiative. In addition to such increased diversification in the cooperation structure, we strive for more diversified mobility patterns and different forms of mobility. Hence, with its focus on digitalisation, the new Erasmus+ generation 2021-27 is in line with and supports the University's digitalisation agenda. In the past Erasmus+ generation 2014-21, the Erasmus+ programme has already been an important driver of the introduction of learning agreements at UPB and of achieving other objectives of the Bologna principles. The next generation will ease mobility, digitalise processes and drive, among others, automatic recognition.

After a period of steep quantitative growth we would like to attract a larger number of particularly well-qualified international students. One effect of such qualitative growth will be the increased positive impact of incoming students on our general student body, faculty and the community of Paderborn. To support this development, we strive to implement more joint study programmes and to promote the setup of programmes fully taught in English. In addition, UPB would like to offer more options for the acquisition of languages and cultural competencies.

On one side, one of our main goals for the upcoming years is a process of consolidation to ensure the success of the quantitative achievements accomplished over the last decade and on the other side, further develop teaching and learning across our university.

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

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Paderborn University has been participating in Erasmus+ Key Action 1 (KA 1), mobility of higher education students and staff, for many years. For a long time, the main focus has been on KA 103 (programme countries). In addition, since its launch, we have been engaged in KA 107 (international credit mobility) and are now cooperating with partners in seven countries. In KA 2, UPB has ample experience with cooperation among organisations and institutions through strategic partnerships in one of the University's focus areas, which will serve as a best practice model for a possible roll out to other areas. UPB is furthermore a member of a transnational alliance that aims at gradually developing an innovative cooperation model and has accordingly submitted a proposal in response to the recent European Universities call 2019/2020 (KA 2). Thus, UPB has stepwise widened its scope of participation in the Erasmus+ programme. As the Erasmus+ programme is significantly contributing to achieving a variety of UPB's main objectives, we intend to even further expand UPB's participation, e.g. by adding more regions to its activities in KA 107.

As equality, diversity and inclusion are strongly embedded in UPB's culture, with its participation in the Erasmus+ programme, UPB intends to foster its students' and staff's key competences for lifelong learning and to contribute to their development as European Citizens. In teaching and learning we strive to increase international student mobility (incoming and outgoing) and to foster experiential learning. This is particularly difficult as interest among students for common mobility programmes is slowly declining and patterns of international mobility are changing rapidly. This development requires structural change at UPB as advanced by the next Erasmus+ programme. Like the previous Erasmus+ generation, the new Erasmus+ programme will be one of the most important measures to incentivise and increase international

mobility at UPB.

Almost one third of UPB's partnerships are collaborations with universities in non-EU-countries and at least one third of the student mobility takes place outside of the Erasmus+ area. Thus, international cooperation beyond European borders plays a very important role at our University. While mobility within Europe rather increases the grasp for Europe's diversity, especially mobility outside of Europe creates a strong sense of identity as a European Citizen and an awareness of Europe's cultural heritage. It follows from this that cooperation outside Europe might be an even stronger pillar of the development of European values and of a common understanding and, moreover, collaborations with non-EU universities and countries might in a long-term perspective be important for Europe's access to new markets. Consequently, we strongly embrace the decision of the European Union to foster such activities with partner countries within Erasmus+ (Key Action 107) and to support our University in further developing a worldwide network.

UPB maintains about 167 partnerships with Erasmus+ Programme Countries and another 70 outside of the Erasmus+ region. To ensure sustainability, coherence and visibility, all our partnerships are centrally administered by the International Office. The International Office ensures that partnerships fit into the University's overall strategy and it registers new partnerships internally as well as in the most important national and international databases. The management of contracts for cooperation agreements is also located inside the International Office. We welcome the move of the Erasmus+-programme to ease the conclusion of agreements within Europe and are ready to participate in an increasingly digital process of managing agreements.

Faculties and professors are advised by the International Office on new partnerships. Mostly, new collaborations start at the level of the department or at times even on the level of the discipline and are restricted to a certain subject area. Yet, the International Office supports and facilitates the establishment of new partnerships and the extension of existing partnerships to faculty, inter-faculty or even university level. This leads to several premium partnerships like the ones with Le Mans University in France in arts and humanities, Qingdao University in China in mechanical engineering and sciences and with Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT), China, or Tohoku University, Japan, in business administration and economics.

Internationalisation in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities is very much language-driven and oriented at the exchange of UPB students with Universities in Europe (esp. in Spain, France, Britain and Scandinavia) and in the United States. The technical and natural sciences focus on cooperation with emerging markets. UPB's Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and the Faculty of Natural Sciences strongly engage in recruiting full-time Bachelor students from China and in enabling UPB Master students in going to China. UPB is one of the three most important German universities for Chinese students (excl. Technical Univ.). Recruitment from the Indian subcontinent is especially important for the English Master Programmes offered by the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mathematics and Informatics. On PhD-Level, Russia and the CIS play an important role for that Faculty. UPB's Faculty of Business Administration and Economics has its preference in the "motherlands" of economics like the United States and Great Britain. Yet, another focal area are Asian countries (China, Korea, Japan), where many of UPB's Master students go to as exchange students.

The planned structural changes in our mobility programmes will lead to a diversification of mobility patterns. In addition to traditional mobility, shorter study programmes (summer schools) and applied programmes (internships) are envisaged and will gain importance. UPB has started to offer a greater variety of mobility opportunities and Erasmus+ is supporting this diversification process e.g. with Erasmus+ SMP. Nevertheless, a greater support of short-term mobility through Erasmus would be desirable. Another outcome of our participation in the Erasmus+ programme are models of blended learning, where our strengths in IT are merged with our goals in internationalisation. This will help us to provide students with the digital skills as well as international experience they need for their future jobs.

Such diversification of international experiences requires a greater flexibility in study plans on the one hand, and more structured pathways for mobility on the other. Likewise, it requires standardised registration of mobilities to ensure proper recognition and better automation of recognition. To this end, the comprehensive use of learning agreements as well as the use of grade conversion tables and grade conversion formulas has been implemented at UPB in recent years. These are developments we can build on to pursue full automatic recognition and grading scales in the future.

As outlined in its internationalisation strategy, Paderborn University aims at further internationalising study

and teaching through the creation of additional joint study programmes with international partner universities, the promotion of international mobility and the reduction of mobility barriers. UPB's participation in the European Universities Initiative (Erasmus+ Key Action 2), i.e. the envisaged long-term cooperation within a transnational university alliance at all levels, will help UPB to achieve these objectives. For instance, by facilitating the establishment of more structured mobility patterns which offer a clear international study path with predictable personal investment and outcomes, the Initiative supports the decrease of mobility barriers. The development of innovative offers for both physical and virtual mobility will furthermore enable more students to gain international study experience. The exceptionally close cooperation within the alliance will also create synergies in research, teaching and knowledge transfer, and increase the universities' international visibility and their competitiveness.

In the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2020 UPB has taken intensive action to streamline the implementation of the programme's measures. In the upcoming programme generation, UPB will further increase its measures to improve some of these aspects. Students can find an up-to-date course catalogue on our website and we are working on improving its timely publication and the complete translation of all course titles and contents into English. Though students use learning agreements, usually signed by the sending and by the receiving institution before the start of mobility, we will still have to work on using the digitalised and unified Online Learning Agreements (OLA). Credits earned and grades achieved are documented in our campus management system and may be retrieved by students at any time. However, full documentation of voluntary engagement and other optional components still need to be fully integrated. Learning activities abroad are mostly recognised as outlined in the learning agreement. The recognition framework in place is published on our website.

UPB requests Erasmus+ outgoing students to take educational components of at least 24 ECTS credits per semester at the host institution. However, some students choose not to pursue the full recognition of all the credits earned abroad towards their degree for individual reasons. For instance, some students had already earned enough credits to complete their degree before going abroad, or sometimes students are not satisfied with the grade achieved abroad and hope to score a better grade when taking the course at the home institution. This may be due to less difficulties with the language of instruction. Sometimes students cannot prove the same equivalency as initially documented and agreed on in the learning agreement (e.g. if course content differs largely from the previous agreement), which is why the ECTS cannot be recognized. Yet, all credits that the student likes to have recognised are recognised without requiring the student to take any further courses or exams. With the next Erasmus+ generation 2021-27, UPB will ensure full automatic recognition of all credits (based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System - ECTS) gained for learning outcomes satisfactorily achieved during a period of study/training abroad, including during blended mobility. Our participation in Action 2 will drive this in particular forward and act as a model for all activities in Action 1.

UPB regularly assesses feedback received through reports from both incoming and outgoing participants and takes appropriate action when feedback indicates problems.

UPB does not charge any tuition or exam fees to incoming students.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

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At UPB, internationalisation is heavily interwoven with digitalisation and vice versa. With its strong focus on digitalising mobility processes, the next Erasmus+ generation will spur this interconnectedness even

further. One of the next Erasmus+ programme's major impacts will therefore be the support of Paderborn University's digital progression.

Internationalisation is firmly embedded in our digitalisation strategy and, as mentioned above, in 2017, the permanent working group "Internationalisation and Digitalisation" has been established to work on UPB's internationalisation strategy. Digitalisation plays an important role e.g. in the development of bi- and transnational inter-university teaching and learning formats with cooperating universities and has also become increasingly important within the European University alliance. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, UPB has accelerated its activities to digitalise the course contents and to introduce virtual collaboration with foreign partners. While the pandemic has pushed digitalisation to the forefront, UPB has been working on digitalisation processes for many years. At the turn of the millennium, UPB has identified the interdependence of digitalisation and internationalisation as key for its development and as beneficial for research activities and the quality of teaching as well as learning, and since then it is an integral part of UPB's activities.

The Erasmus+ programme will contribute to another strategic objective of Paderborn University: the empowerment of its students to successfully communicate in international contexts. East Westphalia Lippe, the region Paderborn is located in, is an economically strong region dominated by export-oriented engineering hot spots, IT-industry and international "hidden champions". Many of those companies are world market leaders in their field. Therefore, it is UPB's goal to prepare the local youth for the international activities in our region, enhance their employability and, at the same time, retain international students as specialists for the region. The Erasmus+ programme is significantly supporting Paderborn University in its efforts to encourage and enable its students to develop intercultural skills and gain international experience. UPB considers the internationalisation of the course content and courses taught in English to be as important as the students' international experience abroad.

One third of Paderborn University's student body is studying to become teachers. Therefore, UPB envisages the Erasmus+ programme to impact its teacher training by enhancing the students' ability to deal with the increased multiculturalism in classes and to adequately respond to intercultural needs. Such abilities are not only stimulated by international experience abroad but also by the internationalisation of our curricula and with help of incoming international staff

Paderborn University undertakes various measures to achieve these objectives. For instance, we have increased the number of international university lecturers as well as the number of courses offered in English. Currently, there are nine programmes fully taught in English and this number is steadily growing. International experience is now a key element in the nomination process of new professors and UPB aims at further internationalising its curricula. To support this process, there is an internationalisation officer at each faculty. Furthermore, the International Office has steadily grown in recent years. In 2018, it has therefore moved to more spacious premises in a new building, providing more space to internationalisation in a very literal sense.

To ensure success in mobility outcomes, Paderborn University has heavily invested in German language courses for foreign students and has established German Language Support with more than 16 teachers. Incoming exchange students may participate in preparatory and course-related German courses free of charge. Erasmus students play an important role in diversifying the campus. By providing support such as language courses, buddy programmes or assistance in finding accommodation, we try to enable them to find their way around on campus and in lectures and to cope with everyday challenges. Learning German will not only ensure better social integration but also impact the student's development of a European Citizenship.

In order to enable students to develop language skills in languages other than German, e.g. when preparing for a stay abroad, students have a wide choice of 19 languages taught in our Centre for Language Studies. To bundle the diverse offers and to improve the students' support, the Centre for Language Studies, the International Office and the Student Advice Centre are now located in the same building.

In general, the International Office promotes stays abroad on its website and on Facebook as well as via UPB's Instagram account.

To closely monitor the implementation, indicators are in place to quantify the impact of our internationalisation activities and hence of our activities within the Erasmus+ programme. These indicators include the number of foreign university lecturers, incoming and outgoing students as well as outgoing staff, stays abroad, Master programmes taught in English, German course participants, summer schools

and the number of foreign language courses. We also measure these indicators in independent benchmarks with other German universities (cf. "Profildaten zur Internationalität deutscher Hochschulen"). Yet, after years of quantitative growth in most of these areas, we are working on qualitative improvements, e.g. through digitalisation, the full implementation of all Erasmus+ principles and through enhancing support measures.

In order to support our students' international study experience digitally and to make exchange as smooth as possible, we intend to use Online Learning Agreements (OLA). We intend to use Online Learning Agreements and to fully manage inter-institutional agreements via the Inter-Institutional Agreement Manager (IIAM) by 2021 and to send and receive student nominations and acceptances by 2022, at the latest. The exchange of Transcripts of Records related to student mobility shall be finalised by 2023.

In the area of KA 2, we expect the continued and extended participation in cooperation projects to have impact both on mobility of staff and students but also on the development of mutual research activities triggered by shared interest as a result of the cooperation. Centralised administrative service is provided to support strategic partnerships' project management and advice in the case of ad-hoc partnerships initiated beyond established settings. With the Erasmus+ programme and the future research framework programme Horizon Europe set up under the roof of one Commissioner, impacts will be evident within the duration of both programmes.