

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT RENEWAL APPLICATION 2007 FOR ERASMUS UNIVERSITY CHARTER

Please describe your institution's strategy, objectives and priorities for its Erasmus activities (mobility, multicultural projects and thematic networks) and any other actions in the context of the Life-long Learning Programme (LLP). What specific actions are planned to give visibility to Erasmus activities and what type of publicity will be given to the Erasmus University Charter and the EPS? What kind of arrangements, if any, does the Institution ensure to comply with non-discrimination objectives (e.g. actions related to gender equality, integration of disabled staff and students, enhancement of social and economic cohesion and combating of xenophobia and racism)?

Exeter's participation in Erasmus dates back to the start of the European programme. Over the past 20 years student mobility has been encouraged, supported and rewarded by various strategies, including the development of four-year degree programmes incorporating a compulsory year abroad on Erasmus placements and, more recently, by encouraging the addition of the Erasmus experience as a valuable option for students on three-year degree programmes. Embedding the Erasmus programme in our degree courses at Exeter has resulted in 20 programmes designated as degrees "with European Study" and a further 44 majoring in or incorporating language study with a year abroad. In addition to these undergraduate programmes, Exeter offers a number of masters-level programmes that combine study at at least one European partner. Some of these result in a double degree for the participating students.

Student mobility is encouraged by the University as a means to increase the internationalisation of curriculum and the campuses, and to enhance the students' academic experience and future employability after graduation. Currently we exchange approximately 400 students per year through our agreements with 120+ partners. The university's aim is to increase this level of participation and, together with other opportunities to study and work abroad, to make student mobility possible for the majority of eligible students at Exeter.

The International Office promotes the Erasmus programme to potential students at Open Days, to first and second year students through talks in the departments, the website, advertising in the student newspaper, and via the network of departmental co-ordinators. Teaching mobility is also supported by the International Office and, on average, 12 academics take up the opportunity to make a teaching visit to a partner institution. The EUC and the EPS will be communicated via the Erasmus pages of the website and staff/student newsletters.

The University of Exeter believes that the diversity of its community is an essential part of its values and enriches employment, research, studying and learning experiences. The University is committed to a policy of Equal Opportunity (EO) and aims to provide a working, learning and social environment that is free from unfair discrimination. It aims to ensure that students, staff and all others associated with the university are treated with dignity, respect, and equity, regardless of inappropriate distinctions, such as gender, race, nationality, ethnic identity or national origin, socio-economic status or role within the university, religious or political beliefs, disability, age, marital status, family circumstance, or sexual orientation. This policy is

implemented through representation at all levels of the university, including an institutional EO Officer and an EO committee; the Vice Chancellor has ultimate executive responsibility for the effective implementation and development of EO policy

Quality of academic mobility activities:

What kinds of specific measures are implemented in the Institution to ensure high quality in academic mobility activities? Details should be provided on: recognition and credit systems, the provision of information on curricula, information and counselling of outgoing students, tutoring and integration of incoming students, provision of student services (in particular accommodation), preparatory and refresher language courses, support and acknowledgement of staff mobility.

In response to the National Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice for Placement Learning, the University has developed its own Code of Good Practice for Student Placements and Study Abroad. This key document sets out how outgoing students should be advised and prepared academically, culturally and linguistically by the department and university language courses. Together with departmental co-ordinators, the International Office (IO) provides information and advice to outgoing students in groups or individually throughout the period of preparation. The IO is also responsible for setting up bilateral agreements or placement contracts, ensuring student contracts, learning agreements and reports are completed, and administering the mobility grants. Academic departments monitor the academic quality of the placement, its integration into the curriculum, the transfer of ECTS credits and make visits to a selection of partners each year.

Incoming students apply direct to the IO where dedicated staff deal with their application, advising them and providing pre-arrival information. Upon arrival an orientation programme is provided by the IO and students are allocated an academic co-ordinator who will support and monitor their progress whilst at Exeter. Students are encouraged to apply early for university accommodation and where this is not available the University's accommodation office will offer advice. Over 100 student clubs and societies are open to incoming Erasmus students, including an Erasmus society, and a buddy scheme operated by the IO together with university English Language support helps students to integrate and settle quickly into life at Exeter. Transcripts are issued at the end of the period of study at Exeter showing ECTS credits and grades.

The IO also promotes teaching visits to academic staff and provides advice and administrative support regarding the associated mobility grant.

Quality of Student placement activities:

What kind of specific measures are implemented to ensure high quality in student placements? Give details on: how the work-programme and the placement agreement are prepared and implemented. Please describe the practical arrangements agreed between the parties. Please specify also the monitoring and evaluation of the placement period as well as its recognition in the curriculum.

The University of Exeter recognises the vital importance relevant work experience plays to our students' employability and future prospects. Consequently 110 students have taken up quality work placements for ECTS credits over four years of Leonardo da Vinci projects. The University is committed to promoting long term relationships with host companies as well as exploring new opportunities for our students.

Guidelines for work Leonardo placements are published at www.offices.ex.ac.uk/ises/leonardo/index.shtml and work placements are publicised to students and staff through a number of seminars involving returning students. Placements are advertised to students via the web and email or are found by students themselves. Students must submit a document detailing responsibilities/work programme and complete either a piece of academic work or a distance learning module for assessment during their placement. Each school has appointed an academic as a Study Abroad Co-ordinator who assesses placements for potential academic value through negotiations with the placement provider. Placements are only approved if they satisfy the rigorous academic criteria. Students and companies complete a Placement Application and Placement Contract which are countersigned by the International Office.

Whilst on placement students are monitored by a placement mentor nominated by the host company and by their academic co-ordinator at Exeter. Students must complete a mid-term and final report as well as their ongoing academic work (either a project or distance learning module as previously stated). Each year approximately 50% of students are subject to a monitoring visit by either their academic co-ordinator or the International Office. During this meeting progress against previously agreed objectives is discussed and a meeting is conducted with the host mentor.