

## **Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)**

***The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.***

***Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees. (max. 5000 characters)***

Participation in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is critical to the success of Keele University's Strategic Plan and Internationalisation Strategy. Mobility of individuals, participation in co-operation projects and improvements in the quality of programmes and student experience will all feed into achievement of the University's Strategic Aims.

International partners are sought and selected to support the development of a diverse staff and student body and to help meet our objectives around impact and engagement. The University is actively seeking to engage with partners where there are common objectives and complimentary activities on a range of levels. We would like to establish some more substantial partnerships with specific institutions through multiple projects including traditional mobility, short programmes, joint programmes, research and engagement with third party external organisations. We aim to work with partners with whom we can have open and honest dialogue to enable realistic joint objectives to be achieved.

The University recognises that many partnerships are organic in their nature and stem from the high quality research links of individual members of staff. Critical factors in the consideration of new partners include a complimentary course and research profile as well as external recognition of high quality standards. In the EU institutions must be holders of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and able to sign inter-institutional agreements. Partnerships are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure both parties are meeting their commitments and that they continue to support our strategic objectives.

Globally we aim to have a healthy geographical and subject area balance amongst our partners. For outgoing mobility we need engagement in staff and student mobility to add value to individuals' academic, professional, social and intercultural skills and their employability. For incoming mobility we want to attract individuals who will integrate well, adding value to our University and assisting us towards our vision 'to continue to be one of the UK's leading campus-based communities'.

Keele has set a target to increase outward mobility numbers, particularly for students, and to attempt to address the imbalance in exchange numbers with EU partners. We will continue to use returning staff and students in innovative ways to encourage future outward mobility. The use of new technology will be crucial in promoting the opportunities as well as facilitating applications, preparation and re-integration.

The Distinctive Keele Curriculum enables Keele undergraduates to have a range of achievements beyond the academic curriculum formally recognised. There are a number of

opportunities to work with the DKC to facilitate international experiences for first cycle students. It is important for Keele to remain amongst the top UK universities for graduate employment and any developments that help to contribute to 'Keele Graduate Attributes' will be prioritised.

Keele University performs well in the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators on Widening Participation from student cohorts currently under-represented in Higher Education. As part of the commitment to providing international opportunities as part of our curriculum, additional bursaries will continue to be provided to support students from widening participation target groups with the additional costs associated with studying abroad.

The University is committed to valuing the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals through commitment to equality and diversity. Participation in staff mobility will continue to be promoted to all and allocated fairly.

Keele aims to increase the number of staff and students who engage in an international experience, however long it may be. Participation can be in many forms, with examples including a semester long exchange, a short work experience, or participating in events with incoming international visitors on campus. Opportunities to develop the offering of international experiences will be explored, utilising links with institutions, employers, alumni and the local community. The University will develop a broader range of mobility opportunities, which target both academic and cultural development and will explore a range of international cooperation projects to facilitate the achievement of an increase in outward mobility numbers at all levels.

The University currently offers Keele degree awards through a small number of selected partners overseas. Joint awards are offered in conjunction with select UK institutions for specific programmes. As part of the University's Internationalisation Strategy, through existing links with recognised institutions and following the University's Collaborative Provision Approval Process (in line with the QAA Quality Code Chapter B10), opportunities to develop additional joint degrees will be explored.

***If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme. (max. 2000 characters)***

The overall strategy, management and coordination of international cooperation projects is the responsibility of the International Recruitment and Development Team. Cooperation projects are managed at two levels. At an institutional level projects will relate to educational programmes ensuring that educational placements are managed within our overall teaching quality framework. Non-educational placements and research projects are, for the most part, managed at a local level within Schools and Faculties, often with support from central administration in the Study Abroad Office.

The overarching coherence of the University's cooperation projects is managed through the International Forum. Documentation is approved and stored centrally to enable awareness throughout the University of All International Engagement.

It is essential that all co-operation projects are appropriately planned and have clear objectives. There must be definable outcomes for the individuals involved and participation should be related to academic, professional or personal development. The University gives preference to bi-lateral projects with reciprocal arrangements, supporting short subject specific programmes with key partners which facilitate exchange of small groups of students and staff. This type of arrangement allows for stronger discipline related links to develop and for individual relationships between faculty members and the student body at Keele and our partners.

Wider dissemination of project outcomes and inclusion of this in future strategy development is conducted informally and formally. This is facilitated through awareness raising activity around the campus, using new technology and through peer learning. Results are reported formally to University Committees and at the International Forum, which raises awareness of the potential for future related activity.

***Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda\*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)***

Keele University's widening participation agenda is explicit in its Access Agreement for OFFA and HEFCE. We encourage applications from candidates with non-traditional qualifications and use the Accreditation of Prior Learning process to ensure recognition and formal credit for previous learning acquired. Participation in the programme will enable continued promotion of international opportunities to students from all backgrounds, encouraging participation in HE from non-traditional learners.

Keele participates in several multi-partner EU FP7 Initial Training Networks for innovative doctoral training. Strengthening our cross-sector networks will allow researchers to work within the wider context, enhancing their creativity and skills set and preparing them well.

Keele works with employers to develop new programmes, including professional development and vocational learning. This collaboration identifies workforce needs and accreditation requirements, informs University initiatives and ensures workplace needs are met through education, training and work-related learning. Participation will enable continued success in developing a globally relevant HE offering.

Keele is committed to continuous quality improvements. Further developing the Keele Learning Environment (student portal) integrating content related to mobility activity will enhance the student experience.

Keele actively recruits staff into emerging disciplines. The University is a Member of the Athena SWAN Charter, recognising the importance of recruitment, retention and progression of women in science, engineering and technology. Further international exposure will enhance our ability to recruit high quality staff.

Keele aims to increase staff and student mobility. Participation will enable a framework for embedding cross-border cooperation into the academic curriculum and staff development programme.

Keele promotes knowledge transfer at all levels, including through continuing professional development, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships for research and active participation in the local cross-sectoral enterprise partnership (LEP). This ensures the alignment of research

and innovation and local investment priorities such that European Structural, Cohesion and Transnational funding can be maximised, and smart specialisation strategies developed. We are well placed to develop solutions to meet local needs through transnational partnerships and projects.

Keele has participated in European Research Framework Programmes since FP5 including in all areas of FP7, the Lifelong Learning Programme, Daphne III, DG-funded projects, the European Science Foundation and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The value of European projects in the last 5 years totals nearly €7.5 million. We aim to expand our profile of applied research in Horizon 2020 through cross-sector and transnational partnerships with training providers, enterprise, local authorities and community organisations.