

Erasmus Policy Statement

Southampton Solent University's Strategic Plan and key strategies demonstrate the strategic drivers which inform its partnerships under Erasmus and priorities for other international activity. The University's Mission is "the pursuit of inclusive and flexible forms of Higher Education that meet the needs of employers and prepare students to succeed in a fast-changing competitive world". The University's commitment to social justice, its Equality, Diversity and Inclusive Scheme which covers everyone who works, studies and visits Solent reflects the commitment to equality of opportunity for all students and staff in respect of all the University's activities.

In pursuance of these objectives the University has developed partnerships with higher education institutions across the European Higher Education Area and beyond Europe whose mission, vision, portfolio of courses, values, pastoral care for students, quality standards, commitment to academic rigour and providing excellence in the student experience reflect and complement its own. A willingness to support teaching and staff training visits and provide pastoral support to a student on an international work placement within the vicinity are also important considerations. Our partnerships are long standing, based on trust, sustainable and meet the University's objective that they are "Imaginative external partnerships which develop the University and make a significant contribution to social justice and economic competitiveness".

One of the objectives of its Strategic Plan is "excellent student employability". The Teaching and Learning Strategy seeks to offer programmes which are international, globally relevant and provide opportunities to "foster higher skills and graduate employability". The University recognises the added value of learning another language, studying or undertaking a work placement abroad in the student's learning journey and curriculum vitae. Hence the University values its partnerships and exchange agreements with institutions in Europe and elsewhere. Cognisant of the objectives of and the target of the Leuven Communiqué, April 2009 that "In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) should have had a study or training period abroad" the University supports the EHEA Mobility Strategy 2020 and aims to:

- increase the number outgoing students
- work towards parity in the number of incoming and outgoing students
- increase the number of disciplines across the University which have an inbuilt study period abroad by modifying course structures
- explore opportunities of working with partners on curriculum development including joint programmes
- offer language provision in order to overcome obstacles for the mobility of students within Europe
- continue to use ECTS for credit transfer and to guarantee academic recognition of studies abroad
- develop and improve the information package (both in hard copy and online formats) made available to out-going students as well as in-coming Erasmus students.
- Increase opportunities for second and third cycle students to study or undertake work placement abroad

The University welcomes a number of colleagues each year from partner institutions for teaching or staff training visits and has increased the number of outgoing staff who do so. The value of staff exchanges is recognised as they offer opportunities for innovation, work shadowing and continuing professional development. In addition they lead to opportunities for further co-operation and joint research; staff mobility and training in enterprises, curriculum development and informed pedagogical practice. Furthermore the benefits

derived from such outward facing educational experiences are transmitted to students, colleagues and external partners in the wider community. At present the University does not have immediate plans to develop double or joint degree programmes. It has, however, participated in many intensive programmes which have contributed to curriculum development and informed pedagogical practice.