ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

University of Stirling

Participation in Erasmus+

The University of Stirling's Strategic Plan 2030 places internationalisation at the heart of its mission "to be a force for good", guided by the pillars of People, Place and Purpose and the values of Ambition, Integrity, and Respect. These values direct our commitment to global engagement, widening participation, intercultural learning, and ethical partnership development. Our Global Engagement Strategy 2024-2030 strengthens this vision through three pillars – Reputational Enhancement, A Single Global Learning Community, and Financial Sustainability – ensuring that all international activity is values-led, responsible, inclusive, and sustainable.

Erasmus+ directly supports the University's strategic priorities in students, staff, research, engagement, and health & wellbeing, providing a structured framework to embed international mobility, cooperation, digital transformation, and intercultural competence across our academic community.

Through Erasmus+, we will enhance our capacity to deliver world-leading teaching and research with global impact, create new partnerships, and strengthen existing ones, and enrich learning experiences – contributing to the University's ambition to broaden its global influence and deepen connections across Europe.

We aim to grow and diversify our international student and staff population while ensuring that inclusion, belonging, and equal access remain central to our approach. Stirling fosters an environment that welcomes diverse backgrounds and strengthens intercultural exchange across the campus. In the most recent academic year, over 140 nationalities are represented on campus, and more than 30% of our students are international. Strategic diversification is supported through high-quality collaborative partnerships – joint and dual degrees, transnational education (TNE), articulation routes, and global pathways – that align with our academic strengths and raise the University's international profile.

We will participate primarily across Key Action 1 (KA1) and Key Action 2 (KA2) to increase equitable mobility, co-create innovative curricula with European partners, and embed internationalisation at home. Delivery will be co-ordinated by the International Mobility Team (IMT) under the oversight of the Senior Deputy Principal (International), with school-level mobility advisors and cross-functional support from internal stakeholders (Research and Innovation, Finance, HR, Student Support, Careers and Employability, and Strategic Planning).

Our mobility activity is designed to ensure transparent processes whilst delivering academic quality, full recognition, and integrated student support. We provide a

curriculum enriched with sustainability, inclusivity and intercultural perspectives, enabling students and staff to thrive in diverse learning environments. The University's current portfolio of study abroad and exchange programmes provides extensive opportunities across Europe and beyond, enhancing global citizenship and preparing graduates for internationalised labour markets. The International Mobility Team works hard to make these opportunities as accessible as possible for students, ensuring: formal credit recognition through established programme-level mapping; transparent academic information for both incoming and outgoing students via detailed course catalogues and Learning Agreements; and continuous and robust monitoring and evaluation.

Through participation in Erasmus+, the University is committed to increasing inbound and outbound student and staff mobility through accessible, flexible pathways – including short-term, blended, and semester mobility options. We prioritise access to mobility programmes for under-represented groups, supported by targeted advising, financial guidance, and inclusive support practices. This includes integrated language learning and intercultural training for students undertaking compulsory international language placements – strengthening their readiness for European study and work contexts.

Widening access has always been of paramount importance to the University of Stirling and we forge a community that supports student inclusion and success. In the most recent year, 16.25% of our home student population came from the 40% most-deprived areas in Scotland. In the same population, 3.81% of students were care-experienced, meaning those students had experience of the care system or were formally looked after before turning 18. There are also academic areas underrepresented in international placements (e.g. education and nursing students). The University will continue to expand international opportunities to those students who face additional barriers to participation, and to ensure that these students are supported to successful outcomes. We believe that institutional participation in Erasmus+ has the greatest potential to expand the current options for these students – both through financial support and accessible placements.

Strategy, objectives and impact

Participation in the Erasmus+ programme aligns with our Strategic Plan 2030 and our Global Engagement Strategy by: embedding global competencies and employability in all programmes; advancing inclusive access to mobility and internationalisation at home; accelerating digital transformation and green skills; deepening research-informed teaching and European collaboration; and contributing to the European Education Area through recognition, mobility, and micro-credential portability.

Given the timeline of reassociation for 2027, our key objectives under KA1 are: (1) to increase equitable student mobility; and (2) to strengthen staff mobility for teaching and training. These areas are where we have the most experience, and where we will see the greatest impact. In addition to this, we are exploring the feasibility of Blended Intensive Programmes, and how these may be implemented across the University.

Under KA2, we aim to join 1-2 KA2 projects across priority disciplines. We will leverage existing partnerships to enhance our knowledge base and establish the University as an effective contributor. This will allow us to be more ambitious in our target for future participation. The University of Stirling is an active member of two major European academic networks, YERUN (Young European Research Universities Network) and HERMES (Higher Education and Research in Management of European Universities), and we want to use the relationships built through these networks to support KA2 collaboration projects.

Indicators

Using our 2025/26 student participation in European mobilities as a baseline, we have established the following targets and indicators for our KA1 objectives:

Objective 1 – Increase equitable student mobility
Target: Grow outbound Student Mobility Study by 35% by 2027/28 (from a baseline figure of 54, European mobility representing 32.3% of total student mobility in AY25/26); ensuring full recognition within 6 weeks of successful completion of the placement. This target will include 10% from fewer-opportunity groups.

Target: Re-establish Erasmus+ Student Mobility Traineeships, working with our Careers and Employability Service for maximum impact and efficiency. The target is for 5 students to participate in Erasmus+ SMT placements during the first year.

Indicators: Tracking of student engagement and application data to assess increase in outreach and activity.

Objective 2 – Strengthen staff mobility for teaching and training
Target: Re-establish Erasmus+ Staff Mobility for teaching and training to 9 in the first year (from a baseline figure of 7, representing our most recent participation in Erasmus+ staff teaching and training under the previous programme) ensuring alignment with faculty strategic plans.

Indicators: These will be measured initially by staff surveys (including post-mobility action plans and assessment of staff satisfaction), and followed up with staff written and oral presentations to the relevant faculty committee.