

Erasmus Policy Statement

UWE Bristol wishes to distinguish itself by becoming a truly international university in the West of England, one which embraces global citizenship as an educational value to which all its staff and students are committed. The principal goal of the internationalisation strategy is seamlessly to integrate the international perspective into all aspects of University life in a manner which will be visible in its ethos, permeate all strategies, implicit in all activities and benefit all staff and students. The University wishes to be recognised internationally for its innovative approach to knowledge exchange formed upon the excellence of its teaching, scholarship and research in order to prepare students for the various needs and challenges of work and society.

Globalisation is rapidly changing the character of higher education, and UWE is responding to these challenges in a number of key ways. We recognise the success of the Lifelong Learning Programme in enabling more and more UWE students to partake in mobility activity, thereby meeting UWE's strategic objectives in enabling UWE students to be employable in a rapidly changing labour market. Through Erasmus, they have been exposed to, and had the opportunity to embrace the culture, values and social understanding of other societies around the world. UWE has fully engaged in the Bologna process and understand the importance of the establishment of the European Higher Education Area.

UWE Bristol wishes to expand its European and international profile. One of the 5 strategic objectives of our internationalisation strategy is to develop a limited number of long-term, sustainable partnerships with, and networks of, institutions in other countries which share our academic philosophy. To this end we aim to achieve the following;

- a) extend the educational opportunity for UWE students (1st, 2nd & third cycles)
 - i) development of collaborative delivery
 - ii) progression opportunities through credit recognition
- b) provide collaborative links for teaching, knowledge exchange, curriculum design and research for UWE staff via institutional partnerships and networks of cognate areas
- c) broaden the dimensions of the UWE student base through international exchanges and overseas recruitment
- d) recruit overseas students, enhancing UWE culturally and educationally
- e) further develop a range of scholarships based on merit and need to facilitate student exchange
- f) help position UWE in pursuit of knowledge exchange by working with a key number of overseas institutions, and networks with whom we can develop good practice
- g) benchmark UWE's performance on a number of key targets at international level

Potential strategic partnerships are proposed by members of the UWE Global team, and begin a rigorous process of due diligence based on a variety of factors which cover fit to strategy, commercial strengths, academic benefits, QAA compliance, operational processes. The approval process for the establishment of any partnership is available via UWE's Academic Partnership Portal, and sets out the process for institutional recommendation & approval.

The targeted geographical areas are based on current strength of relationships and markets which offer potential for future expansion and reputational gain for all involved. UWE wishes to build on existing successful partnerships in Malaysia, Southeast Asia and Southern and Central Africa in particular. In terms of our concentration on the emerging markets we are engaging in partnership activity in Brazil and North America. We see potential for Study abroad opportunities in all these areas.

Another of the 5 key strategic objectives is to develop capacity for international knowledge exchange and collaborative research activity which crosses international boundaries, by achieving the following;

- h) encourage international research activity e.g. projects, visiting staff, exchanges, conferences and seminars, publishing and citation
- i) work in collaboration with appropriate partner institutions e.g. joint research bids/ projects, joint appointments for research, joint research centres, joint supervision of PhDs



- j) working with partners to develop curriculum, quality assurance and enhancement systems, learning and teaching approaches, consultancy services, programme innovation and staff development

The University is looking to increase the engagement in international mobility of our priority groups under the Access Agreement 2013/14. These include the following groups;

- a) Students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods
- b) Care leavers
- c) Access to HE Diploma (QAA validated) students
- d) Disabled students
- e) Students from black and minority ethnic groups
- f) Students from disadvantaged groups accessing the professions
- g) Students in the UWE Federation Colleges

By greater engagement in international activity, we are looking to raise the aspirations and attainment of students from these groups.

UWE's 2020 strategy builds on our academic heritage, strengths and achievements and places the student experience and engagement at the heart of our thinking. It also places our academic focus on practice- orientated programmes and research. Our ambition is to maximise our potential in an unpredictable and competitive global environment. Investment in student and staff international experience is key to achieving this ambition. This includes providing every student with 'Real world' opportunities, such as internships, coaching, peer assistant, placements, project work, community service and volunteering. The University promotes inclusivity with a diverse student and staff population, where difference and different perspectives are explored and celebrated, supporting our students to play their full part in our global society and economy.

Student and staff exchange opportunities are identified and facilitated by the International Development Office, UWE Global team and Faculties. Promotion of international opportunities starts at enquirer and applicant stage through events, social media and web information. In addition, student and staff are made aware of international opportunities via a combination of organised student briefing sessions and web information. Further selection processes are facilitated by the Study Abroad team in conjunction with faculty colleagues & student are then nominated to partner institutions and invited to make applications to partners directly themselves. They are supported during all stages by the Study Abroad team and invited to attend a pre-departure workshop where they have the opportunity to meet fellow students from other Departments and faculties that will also be undertaking a study or work experience abroad. The Study Abroad team have continued contact with Students and Staff when they are overseas and gather feedback to further improve opportunities, review partnerships and promotion to future cohorts.

We expect the impact of UWE's participation to do the following;

1. *to increase the number of higher education graduates;*

Through UWE 2020 strategy, UWE will offer a portfolio of 'first choice' undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with an applied or professional focus, predicated on practice, applied research, scholarship and employer engagement. To facilitate this, UWE will offer an increasing number of international opportunities over a wide range of subjects. This will increase the number of 'real world' opportunities students have access to in a Global environment with the aim of providing all students a global experience.

2. *to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and researcher training, to equip graduates with the knowledge and core transferable competences they need to succeed in high-skill occupations;*

Ensuring that all students are taught by academic and professional support staff who are scholars, experts and leaders in their field, connected to industry, practice or the professions. Staff will have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge through the sharing of best practice with international partners and developing their understanding of the skills and knowledge required in the Global market place.

3. *to provide more opportunities for students to gain additional skills through study or training abroad, and to encourage cross-border co-operation to boost higher education performance;*

All students will have opportunity to undertake an international experience in order for them to develop the skills required in a global market place. This may include development of cultural awareness, language skills, group working, and time management. UWE provides support for students to access these opportunities, particularly targeting students who might have barriers.

4. *to strengthen the "knowledge triangle", linking education, research and business and*
UWE employs a proactive and systematic approach to partnership development, engagement and enhancement, with an appropriate number of key strategic partners (at home and overseas), consolidating activity to deliver the highest value for UWE Bristol across all areas, in particular enhancing our learning and teaching, research and infrastructure.

5. *to create effective governance and funding mechanisms in support of excellence.*

As UWE works towards our 2020 ambitions, there is to be a £200m planned investment in our estate, infrastructure and staff to further advance our learning, teaching, scholarship and internationally recognized research. UWE will initiate a strategic reduction in the size of its home undergraduate full-time student base, to support its focus on an outstanding learning experience that is practice-orientated, with connections to the professions, employers and market needs, in order to maximize the success of our students and graduates.

Professor Steve West
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