

## 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.*

Internationalisation is an integral component of the overall strategy at the Hochschule RheinMain (RheinMain University of Applied Sciences). The University<sup>1</sup> considers internationalisation a requirement in providing high-quality study programmes as well as high-quality teaching and research. Furthermore, integrating internationalisation will increase the University's appeal to students, instructors and partners in industry, education and research. The goal is to fully incorporate internationalisation into the University's culture. For this purpose, all university staff members and students are provided opportunities to acquire international experience. The University encourages and provides active support. The Hochschule RheinMain welcomes international students and instructors from all parts of the world and fosters integration and intercultural exchange. Recruiting qualified international scientists is an important contribution to global knowledge and experience transfer as well as to internationalisation at home.

The Hochschule RheinMain maintains relationships with partner universities around the world, mostly from European countries. There are currently 80 European partner universities. The Erasmus programme is therefore of great significance to the University's internationalisation strategy. The remaining 40 partner universities collaborating in the Hesse program include such universities as Wisconsin, Massachusetts und Queensland, which are also supported by the Hessian Ministry for Science and Art. The University strives to build vibrant and strong partnerships for meaningful collaboration and mutual exchange. Therefore, the University selects new partner universities that fit a set profile. Interdisciplinary teaching and learning agreements are entered into to create synergy.

The University prepares the students to qualify for international careers and creates a teaching and research environment that encourages and facilitates an international orientation. For this purpose, the University encourages study and internship placement for students in any study cycle and with any major as well as continuing education programmes abroad for the university staff. The aim is to further increase the mobility rates in all areas while maintaining the quality by providing targeted counselling and high-level student assistance. Individuals with disabilities participating in the programme and/or participants with children are offered additional assistance. Satisfactorily completed activities abroad are fully recognised according to the provisions set out in the University regulations. Teaching staff mobility allows instructors to gain intercultural experience abroad, which facilitates internationalisation of teaching. Staff mobility fosters a sense of European citizenship and mutual understanding and enhances language skills and intercultural competence of the staff and altogether has a very positive effect on the welcoming culture at the University. Offering summer schools and English-language courses regularly at the Hochschule RheinMain is an important contribution to internationalisation at home and also provides less mobile students opportunities for exchange with participating international students.

Since the winter semester 2013/2014, the Hochschule RheinMain has been offering new degree programmes. As with re-accreditation of existing degree programmes, the international aspect of the new programmes will be taken into consideration. It is mandatory that the degree programmes include at least one of the following aspects: addition of a mobility window; teaching foreign language skills equivalent to proficiency level B2 (vantage or upper intermediate) or higher; a set number of courses conducted in a foreign language; provision of intercultural competence; establishment of dual degree programme with a foreign partner university. The development of high-quality dual degrees, especially dual master's degrees, is also an important objective of the University's internationalisation strategy and will be further strengthened. Currently, successful dual degree programmes are in place with Switzerland and Thailand, and arrangements with Chile are in the final stages. The partner university in Namibia offers graduate students from the Hochschule RheinMain the option of obtaining a doctorate degree.

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<sup>1</sup> Hochschule RheinMain = The University, all other universities = university

*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.*

The Hochschule RheinMain has partnership agreements with universities in all regions of the world and is currently involved in international cooperation projects, such as with the German-Jordanian University and the Vietnamese-German University. As part of the University's internationalisation strategy, the goal is to further expand strategic partnerships and to intensify collaboration with selected partners. Knowledge alliances between the University and business partners will be strengthened under the new Programme. By maintaining well-established, high-quality networks and solid contacts to internationally-oriented enterprises, the University ensures its competitiveness in the education market and its ability to attract more students. In addition, the University strives to improve cooperation with European and non-European partner universities by setting up international summer school programmes at the Hochschule RheinMain.

*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.*

By participating in the Programme, the Hochschule RheinMain intends to achieve the policy objectives of the Modernisation Agenda as follows:

1. Raising the educational level to cover Europe's need for university graduates and researchers: In a globalised world, the Hochschule RheinMain aims to provide students with the necessary education to qualify them for international career opportunities in their home country or abroad. To do so, the University adds international aspects to the programmes, thereby enhancing the quality and employability of our graduates in the European labour market. The students are provided intercultural experiences, increase their foreign languages skills, are acquainted with educational systems in other countries or with corporate cultures abroad. The University welcomes foreign students, who, within the framework of the Programme, decide to study abroad at the Hochschule RheinMain and offer incoming students support and assistance in all areas.

2. Improvement of quality and relevance of university education: The University reviews existing degree programmes on an ongoing basis and develops new degree programmes in order to meet the requirements of the global labour market. Good research and teaching are of great importance to the Hochschule RheinMain, which is reflected, among others, in the establishment of the University's "Research Center for Sustained Mobility" and in the annual "Commitment to Teaching" awards.

3. Enhancement of quality through mobility and cross-border collaboration: Students and staff are given opportunities to acquire additional skills abroad during mobility windows. Achievements acquired abroad are recognised. The quality of the education programmes is greatly increased through the internationalisation of teaching and learning.

4. Making best use of the knowledge triangle: The University combines university education, research and business to achieve excellence and regional development. The Hochschule RheinMain focuses on practice-oriented education and has built a strong networks with small and medium-sized enterprises in the region and with their branches in other countries. All members of the teaching staff have extensive practical experience. The Hochschule RheinMain is the first university of applied sciences in Germany that has its own doctoral programme and, since the summer semester of 2009, the University has a cooperative doctoral programme agreement with the Goethe University Frankfurt. In collaboration with the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences and the Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences, a new research center has been established. Joint research projects with international partners are very important, especially in connection with mobility in the master's programme.

5. Improvement of management and funding: Participation in the Programme ensures that the funding system for the University's internationalisation plans is solid and efficient. As a result of anchoring the internationalisation programme into the overall strategic plan, the university administration will be providing additional long-term funding from the University's budget to implement the programmes. This ensures that project plans have a solid foundation.