

## ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT 2014-20

### International Strategy

The University Strategy Westminster 2020, will identify the priority partner regions for delivery of the University's mission as a distinctive, inclusive, international, research-engaged & practice-informed university at the heart of London. Turkey, the Southern Caucasus & Central Asia are lead areas for new partnerships to extend the University's recognised achievements in these areas. India, China & the ASEAN countries are also key priorities for new & extended partnerships. Within the International Strategy, the University's Europe Strategy encompasses Westminster's Erasmus Policy, the primary objectives of which are prioritised below:

- 1) Student mobility & staff mobility, for study & transnational traineeships including virtual mobility programmes, will be organised within & between Europe & Third Country partners, at all cycles for professional & support staff as well as academics, with targeted support for students from under-represented socio-economic & ethnic groups.
- 2) Masters and Doctoral degrees for dual or multiple certification will be jointly designed in consortia or subject network groups of HEIs, with the aims of promoting interdisciplinarity & attracting the best Masters students to Europe for part of their studies and providing opportunities for European students to study in and beyond Europe.
- 3) Executive and Professional Development intensive programmes will demonstrate Westminster's distinctiveness & excellence in niche areas.
- 4) Strategically selected partnerships & knowledge alliances with joint funding for education and research will promote innovation & entrepreneurship in Europe & secure broader impact through Horizon2020.
- 5) Policy development will support enhancement and recognition of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), pan-European networks and communities of practice, & Vocational Education and Training (EU-VET).
- 6) Capacity building projects will contribute to the modernisation & reform agendas in Europe and Third Countries.
- 7) External partnerships will be extended through international NGOs, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Chambers of Commerce, local authorities, Professional Bodies, leadership and development organisations, research councils, student representation bodies, SMEs & for-profit companies whose international programmes form part of a coherent social engagement programme.

Partners are selected in accordance with regional priorities approved by the University's Executive Board informed by overall University strategy, which is updated through annual strategic planning. Due diligence checks are defined by the University's Academic Portfolio Review processes & Collaborative Handbook which aligns with best UK practice as defined in section B10 of the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code. For the Erasmus schemes the priority regions are the European Union states, Accession candidate countries & Third Country networks. Westminster's Turkey Partnership programme foregrounds partnerships with Turkish universities & regional networks, working in partnership with the British Council. Georgia & the Southern Caucasus states, & Uzbekistan & the Central Asian states have been prioritised for capacity building partnerships.

Key objectives in the University's Strategy Westminster 2020 will focus on knowledge exchange partnerships & capacity building. The programme of activities from 2014/15 prioritises tripartite links with local organisations for professional development of youth, academics delivering First

& Second cycle programmes, English for learning, teaching and assessment, & frameworks for quality assurance and enhancement. Priority groups for student mobility are new first year entrants studying under new fee regime conditions & the Westminster Enterprise Challenge pilot scheme (for short intensive mobility periods) is expected to increase the motivation of applicants and students to plan ahead to engage in Erasmus exchanges in their second year of study. Students from under-represented backgrounds in HE will be supported by a Westminster scholarship, & those who cannot leave London for family or community reasons will be supported to take part in pan-European programmes digitally or through traineeships or volunteering with local migrant communities in London & the wider region. More flexible pathways are being designed by Westminster's Learning Futures Project.

Our International Strategy continues to internationalise the curriculum to maintain the diverse student community (over 150 countries). The Learning Futures project will develop a creative blended learning environment for learners & colleagues working with their peers through digital collaborations & periods of mobility. Research & knowledge exchange networks will ensure a presence on all continents. Long-term strategic partnerships will extend successful capacity building projects for delivery our model of independent student learning.

### **Organisation and Implementation of International Cooperation Projects**

Networks for the development of international cooperation within the EU and with Third Country partners are developed by subject specialists and supported by experienced project managers at local and University levels. Prioritisation of funding bids is determined by the Faculty Executive in accordance with University strategy. Contributions to innovative education and research practices draw on Westminster's distinctive expertise. Where these include newer qualifications such as the Professional Practice Doctorate the specialism of senior subject staff with professional body accreditation experience are core to the project's implementation. As the Research Strategy includes the objective of jointly designed doctorates a Research Collaborations Group is developing policy and protocols as a framework for cross-university implementation. Interdisciplinarity is a core strength at Westminster and the new role of International Director at Faculty level will provide a key lead in the organisation of project development, staff training for delivery and capacity building in education, research and knowledge exchange. The projects for which Westminster is the lead coordinator require specific support from the Business Development Officers and Research Development Officers whose subject expertise allied to project management experience provides continuous support from inception to project completion. University level support for applications and implementation of projects funded by the European Commission's programmes is led by Research and Enterprise Services (RES), the Research Office, and in the Quality and Standards team.

### **Modernisation Agenda**

The University of Westminster endorses the EU's commitment to the five priority objectives through participation in Key Actions prioritised for Erasmus+ 2014-20.

The quality of Westminster's academic portfolio and the experience of the students and staff in its community of scholars will be enriched by participation in pan-European and international cooperation projects. Students' social and intercultural skills and their development as professionals and global citizens will be fostered and this will enhance their employability attributes and opportunities for further study in educational institutions and enterprises as lifelong learners. This will contribute to the attainment levels of graduates and researchers within the European area and with specific Third Country and neighbourhood areas, and make more visible the relevance of their higher education studies.

Mobility for First Cycle students will be promoted through Westminster Enterprise Challenge to motivate new students to plan their Erasmus mobility by gaining confidence through short periods of exposure to study and traineeships in international environments. Cross-border cooperation will be developed further through the design of Joint Degrees at Masters and Doctoral level with the aim of providing single certification (of Joint Degrees) in collaboration with other degree-level awarding partners.

Knowledge partnerships with business enterprises will be developed through Westminster's Graduate School and new research institutes, which will optimise design and digital technologies across networks with European and Third Country states. Mobility will play a central role in developing and sustaining the networks. Regional development in London across the Capital will be augmented by strategic partnerships with other capital cities in accordance with the priorities set within the International and Europe Strategies.

All mobility activities by students and staff will be recognised more fully through formally recorded mechanisms, on the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) for students incorporating the Diploma Supplement, and through the University's Personal and Professional Development Record (PPDR) for academic and professional support staff.

Westminster's new five-Faculty structure will be established in 2013/14 together with the revised committee structure at local and university levels. This will continue to ensure effective governance through accountable and transparent monitoring of activities within the overall framework of the University's International Strategy, and the European Strategy and its constituent Erasmus Policy Statement.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union