



## Erasmus Policy Statement 2014-2020 – University of Groningen

### *Mobility (KA1)*

The University of Groningen (UoG) is a comprehensive research university, providing high quality, research driven education. UoG aims to be a truly international university, yet firmly rooted in the region and working closely together with business and society, local government and the public. Internationalisation is a tool for the university to further improve the quality of its education and research. Internationalisation is an integral part of the overall strategy and organisation.

The University of Groningen invests in attracting the most talented students and staff and creating sufficient diversity. This has resulted in 15% international students and over 20% international academic staff with 120 different nationalities. The university stimulates and facilitates outgoing student and staff mobility by providing study abroad and placement opportunities for its students and by maintaining and increasing, in a selective way, its international partnerships. UoG also provides funding for international staff and student mobility in addition to Erasmus.

In order to realise incoming and outgoing mobility and to enhance quality and diversity, cooperation with international partners and networks around the world is crucial. The university's high ambitions in internationalisation (5,000 international students in 2015, 50% outgoing student mobility and 20% international academic staff) require intensifying and extending cooperation with European and other international partners. The enhancement of staff mobility (organisation and recognition) will be the focus of our attention in the coming years.

There are many different ways and frameworks of cooperation, with various goals. First, to support students in their wish to study abroad a large number of exchange agreements with universities all over the world have been established. Individual faculties decide on whether a prospective partner is of interest to its students and staff. Exchange partners are chosen by faculty staff on the basis of personal contacts and the quality and complementarity of the study programmes offered to their students and on support services rendered. Inter-institutional agreements support the overall university strategy for international cooperation. International exchange partnerships are increasingly established in the frame of a double or multiple degree programme. Secondly, a selective number of strategic partnerships (long term cooperation in different fields, for several reasons, and important for the university overall) have been established with partners from different geographical areas. In Europe, with the U4 partners Ghent, Goettingen and Uppsala a strong and broad cooperation has been established in the fields of education, research and university management. Joint research projects are up and running, new projects are initiated, and joint master's and doctorate programmes are being prepared. Outside Europe, similar strong relations have been developed with e.g. Japan (Osaka), Indonesia (UGM, ITB), China (Fudan, Tsinghua), Brasil (USP), and Mexico (UNAM).

In many cases the strongest partners of the University of Groningen appear in various forms in international cooperation frameworks. For example, Osaka, Fudan, and UGM are third-country partners in Erasmus Mundus Master Courses coordinated by Groningen.



Besides exchange partners and strategic partners, education and research cooperation is established with strong partners in various international networks, e.g. the Coimbra Group in Europe and APAIE for the Asia-Pacific region.

Strong long-term cooperation has been established with partners in Africa as well. In the past, this involved mainly development cooperation projects with capacity and curriculum building for reasons of social responsibility. Today, Groningen's main research themes of Energy, Healthy Ageing and Sustainable Society create opportunities for cooperation worldwide, including Africa.

The University of Groningen actively participates in the development of double, multiple and joint degree programmes. Students can enroll in 3 double degree Bachelor programmes (specialisations of accredited study programmes), in 18 double/multiple degree programmes at Master level, and in 1 Joint Doctorate programme. Eight of the double/multiple/joint degrees are Erasmus Mundus Master Courses. Currently, 3 out of the 18 double/multiple Master degrees are accredited joint degree programmes and the intention is to increase this number. Some programmes have already started this accreditation procedure.

Most non-degree (or credit) mobility is realised in 120 and 180 ECTS programmes. The majority of students in Humanities choose a mobility period in the second semester of the second year or the first semester of the third year (facilitated by the programme). In Science and Medicine mobility is realised at master level as well. Increasingly, international programmes have a compulsory study abroad component.

### ***Projects (KA2)***

The University of Groningen believes in the need for and importance of having strong universities abroad, both inside the EU as well as in countries bordering on the EU and in the rest of the world. Only when having strong partner universities abroad, with well-organised study programmes in all 3 cycles, the exchange of students, staff, and researchers can be beneficial to both sides. Capacity Building and Curriculum Development projects therefore will continue to be of interest and will be initiated with universities in e.g. China, India, Russia, Latin America and Africa. Projects will be supported by the Board of the University and both students as well as academic and administrative staff will be involved.

The Bologna Process will further develop in the coming years. This will continuously have an impact on the internal organisation of teaching and learning and the university's worldwide positioning and international strategy. Participation in international projects for education and training creates a backbone for the further development of international curricula, mobility and worldwide positioning of our offer in education and training. Participation in international projects gives focus and creates urgency to work towards clear results and project outcomes. For reasons mentioned above, it is our ambition to use the extensive experience gained from the LLP/Erasmus programme, Tempus, Erasmus Mundus, ICI-ECP, and Tuning in future projects. The coordination of and participation in projects under Erasmus for All will be promoted. The university is open to share its experience with partners and actively disseminate the results. Opportunities for student and staff mobility will be used in order to reach the strategic goals of the university, i.e. to increase the number of



students with a study abroad experience by the time of their graduation, and support for and recognition of international staff mobility.

### ***Modernisation agenda (KA3)***

A changing world will continuously bring about changes to policy objectives and the international strategy. Priority issues for the University of Groningen are research-driven education, inclusive learning communities, attractiveness, accessibility and differentiation, quality education, mobility and cooperation, and last but not least employability and career services. These ambitions are laid down in the Vision on Education of the University of Groningen.

Opportunities for international mobility, offered by the Programme to all students in degree programmes, as well as a broad offer of international (double/joint) degree programmes are expected to increase the attractiveness of study programmes at the University of Groningen. A diverse offer of study programmes with clear entry requirements, combined with the “binding study advise”, are expected to increase the number of students who will start and finish a successful academic career.

International cooperation and student exchange agreements will serve as instruments to identify the best students for both non-degree and degree mobility between institutions. Long-term institutional cooperation in specific fields of study will help establish double and/or joint degree programmes. Joint programmes will enhance the attractiveness of the institutions involved; it will provide high quality curricula and stimulate students and staff mobility.

The University of Groningen aims to play an active role in society as an innovative knowledge institution. In order to successfully do so, it communicates and collaborates intensively not only with international partners but with its immediate surroundings as well.

The University has identified three main themes in which it excels: Healthy Ageing, Energy, and Sustainable Society. These themes have strong bases in various prominent research areas at the University and have clear links to both business and society in the northern provinces of the Netherlands. Cooperation in the “knowledge triangle” will lead to placement opportunities for students, providing them with work experience benefiting their future careers. Projects recently started for Internationalisation at Home and International Classroom as well as for Career Services. These projects address all issues concerning quality education in an international, multicultural setting and employability. The administrative and financial management of the University is currently being adapted and reorganised. Experience and information on project management and organisation can and will be shared in a more efficient way. For all types of externally funded projects, including Erasmus for All, this will be an advantage.

Participation in the Programme is expected to be instrumental for reaching our goals. The road ahead in internationalization is full of challenges. Sustainable and fruitful partnerships through EU programmes, e.g. under Erasmus for All, are indispensable for making this a success.