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## Erasmus Policy Statement

<b>Date approved:</b>	19/06/2020	<b>Date policy statement will take effect:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	2027 (date of next iteration of Erasmus to be confirmed by the National Agency for Erasmus)
<b>Approving Authority:</b>	Academic Council				
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Registry				
<b>Consultation undertaken:</b>					
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy:</b>	Not required – National Agency for Erasmus regulatory framework				
<b>Reference(s)</b>					
<b>Expiry Date of Policy (if applicable)</b>	2027				
<b>Audience:</b>	Public – accessible to anyone				
<b>Category:</b>	Erasmus				

**1 Version Control and Change History**

<b>Version Control</b>	<b>Date Effective</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Amendment(s)</b>
1	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	Academic Council AC:DOC:169:11:01	None

**2 Purpose of Policy**

This policy sets out the Institute's commitment to implementing the EU Erasmus+ Programme in accordance with the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, 2021 – 2027 and with the regulatory requirements prescribed by the National Agency for Erasmus in Ireland (HEA).

**3 Definitions**

<b>Word/Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Erasmus+	Current iteration of the Erasmus EU Programme for mobility in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014 – 2020.
Mobility	Ability for Institute students and staff to travel to participating partner higher education institutions, or to industry within the EU for the purpose of teaching, learning, research and continual professional development.
ECHE	Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.  The Institute is required to apply for an ECHE in order to participate in the Erasmus Programme. A Charter renewal application is required every 7 years for each successive iteration of the programme. The Charter provides the principles and framework in which the Institute can engage in international collaboration.
National Agency for Erasmus	The HEA is the National Agency for Erasmus+ Programme in Ireland. The Institute's compliance with the principles of the ECHE is overseen by the HEA in accordance with the ECHE Monitoring Guide.
Erasmus KA1	Erasmus Key Action 1: mobility of higher education students and staff
Erasmus KA2	Erasmus Key Action 2: strategic partnerships for cooperation and exchange of practices

#### **4. Application and Scope**

- Staff of the Institute who are involved in Erasmus+ mobility, whether through teaching, research and professional development, or who are involved in the administration and implementation of the Programme;
- Students of the Institute who undertake Erasmus+ Study, or Traineeship Mobility;
- Higher education partner institutions whose staff and students collaborate with the Institute on Erasmus+ teaching, learning, research and continual professional development activities.

#### **5 Policy Principles**

**The Institute commits to implementation of the Erasmus Charter Principles as follows:**

- Respects in full the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion set out in the Erasmus+ Programme;
- Ensures equal and equitable access and opportunities to current and prospective participants from all backgrounds, paying particular attention to the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities;
- Ensures full and automatic recognition of all credits (based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System – ECTS) gained for learning outcomes satisfactorily achieved during a period of study/training mobility abroad, including during blended mobility;
- Charges no fees to incoming Erasmus students for tuition, registration, examinations, and access to library, or laboratory facilities;
- Ensures the quality of the mobility activities and the cooperation projects throughout the application and implementation phases;
- Promotes sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices in the implementation of Erasmus.

#### **6. Context**

The Institute has a long and rich history of participation in Erasmus since 1997, which has resulted in the development of collaborative research, student and staff mobility, innovations in teaching and learning, and capacity-building with 70+ EU higher education institutions and enterprises across the EU.

Participation in Erasmus+ is a key element of Internationalisation as outlined in the Institute's Strategic Plan. *Enhanced internationalisation* - identified as one of the eight strategic goals of the Institute - will be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- increased enrolment of international learners;
- promotion of Erasmus+ mobility opportunities;
- collaborative projects with partner universities;
- integration of international study, or work-placement within curricula;
- enhancement of the international student experience.

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The need for enhanced internationalisation is compelling, due to unprecedented demand for international education programmes at the Institute; the pressures on the Institute to increasingly self-fund; the requirement for the Institute to equip its graduates with the attributes and employability skills needed to survive and thrive in an international business environment. Additionally there is a requirement for the Institute to have more graduates with the linguistic skills-set and intercultural competence necessary to work effectively in an international setting.

The Institute is committed to increase mobility opportunities for all, whether in the form of engaging with international visiting delegations to the campus; participation in a traditional mobility (semester-, or yearlong), or participation in short mobilities in order to increase the profile of students engaging in Erasmus. The Institute is proactive in developing KA2 strategic partnership models for short, intensive mobilities, particularly within the fields of Creative Arts, Informatics, Business and Humanities.

The Institute has been to the fore in the Institute of Technology sector in attracting international students from across the globe through direct recruitment and through developing trans-national educational collaborations with universities in North America, South America, Canada, Middle East, and Asia. These collaborations allow for student and staff exchange and also for advanced-entry into programmes through articulation agreements. Additionally the Institute is active in networking with industry, community and cultural organisations and graduates to enhance international opportunities for staff and students.

Alongside recruitment of international learners, the Institute welcomes an average of 120 incoming Erasmus students annually, which contributes to a diverse multicultural learning environment on campus. The Institute promotes student integration and active citizenship through the its range of academic and student supports and through the wide network of student-led societies and community volunteering opportunities that are open to local, national and international students.

The Institute deploys the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), ensuring automatic recognition and transfer of credits for inbound and outbound students from partner universities and for applicants from other HEIs applying to the Institute from outside of the Erasmus exchange programme.

The Institute recognises that participation in Erasmus will continue to be a key element in its international activity, as international mobility adds enormous value to the academic award attained and enhances professional development. Mobility and international collaborations are drivers in enhancing the quality of learning, teaching, research and continuous professional development and will serve to continually enhance the Institute's profile in Europe and beyond.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities of the Institute regarding Erasmus+:**

### **7.1 Selection of Erasmus partner universities:**

The Institute will continue to engage with existing partner universities and will seek opportunities to collaborate with new partner higher education institution, in order to enhance exchange opportunities for students and staff. Collaborations will include participation in KA1 Erasmus mobility, participation in KA2 strategic partnerships, and in EU research and engagement. Factors in the consideration of new partners include verification that a potential partner institution has been awarded the ECHE and identification of potential

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partners with common objectives, complementary activities and programmes that offer exchange opportunities with new and emerging programmes at the Institute, which are new to Erasmus.

### **7.2 Promotion of Outbound Student Mobility;**

The Institute commits to continually improve outbound student mobility in an attempt to further mitigate the imbalances in inbound/outbound student exchange flows (ratio of 3:1). This will continue to be done through a range of mechanisms including: increased support from the Institutes' Marketing and Communications Unit to assist with social media and web-promotion of Erasmus; class-visits by the Institutional Erasmus Coordinator and student graduates of Erasmus; peer-to-peer Erasmus promotion, and interventions by Erasmus Academic Programme Coordinators to promote student engagement in Erasmus. Intending students for outbound Erasmus mobility will be assessed for academic suitability and will be nominated in writing by the Head of Department, or nominated Programme Coordinator.

### **7.3 Preparation of students for Outbound Erasmus mobility:**

#### **7.3.1 Pre-Mobility**

The Institute undertakes to ensure that outbound students have been duly prepared for Erasmus mobility by the following means: a series of one-to-one planning and pre-departure consultations with the Erasmus Institutional Coordinator; preparation of application documentation; preparation and sign-off of a Learning, or Training Agreement by the Academic Coordinator; provision of a Checklist of supporting documentation; facilitation of a pre-departure workshop for outbound students; and completion of a 1st online language exam on the Erasmus Online Language Support portal (OLS) (where relevant).

#### **7.3.2 During Mobility**

The Institute undertakes to maintain contact by email and online with students while on Study, or Traineeship abroad and to provide exceptional crisis-support to students when required, and to pay the first instalment of the Erasmus grant upon verification of commencement of the mobility. Additionally the Institute undertakes to ensure that students have provided the requisite documentation required at this stage of the mobility (Certificate of Commencement of Study/Traineeship and approval of Changes to Learning/Training Agreement).

#### **7.3.3 After Mobility**

The Institute undertakes to ensure that students provide the requisite supporting documentation on completion of the mobility: (Certificate of Completion of Study/Traineeship, and official transcript of records verifying that the student has achieved the requisite ECTS for programme-progression eligibility; completion of Online Final Report on Mobility Tool and completion of a 2<sup>nd</sup> online language exam on the Erasmus Online Language Support portal (OLS) where applicable. The Institute undertakes to pay the Erasmus grant-balances on completion of mobility. A Diploma Supplement will be made available to graduates free-of-charge. Post-mobility, the Institute will encourage graduates of the Erasmus Programme to share the benefits of their Erasmus experience with peers at class-visits and through the creation of video clips and blogs.

#### **7.4 Outbound Staff Mobility**

The International Office undertakes to advise all staff by email of the availability of Erasmus mobilities each year and invites Expressions of Interest. It undertakes to make staff who are interested in a Staff Training mobility of the DELTA digital badge initiative. The Institute undertakes to ensure that where demand for Erasmus Staff Mobility exceeds the number of mobilities available in a given year, that staff are selected in a fair manner by a panel with consideration given to: undertaking of a mobility in the recent past; alignment of the proposed mobility with the Institute's international agenda; potential for the mobility to multiply student participation in Erasmus; contribution to wider staff development through the sharing of learning and best practice acquired during the mobility. Preference is normally given to Staff who are full-time employees of the Institute.

#### **7.5 Inbound Staff Mobility**

The Institute will consider teaching (and non-teaching) mobility requests from partner universities and organisations in accordance with the signed inter-institutional agreement. Priority will be given to requests where the proposed mobility aligns with the Institute's strategic vision and where the mobility can be readily accommodated within a Department, or Functional Area without negatively impacting staff-resourcing and operational planning.

#### **7.6 Inbound Erasmus Student Mobility**

**The International Office manages the following services and supports to inbound Erasmus students:**

- Provision of an Institute Guide for Erasmus students with details of programmes and modules available to incoming Erasmus students;
- coordination of Nominations sent by the partner university;
- coordination of Application documentation;
- coordination of School approval and signing of Learning Agreements;
- Facilitation of International Welcome Days for incoming Erasmus students;
- Assistance with Accommodation for Erasmus students;
- Administrative assistance with incoming students paperwork on arrival, during mobility and post-mobility;
- Pastoral and administrative support to students during the mobility;
- Coordination of an pre-exam-registration form and provision of final transcript of records to partner institutions at the end of the mobility along with information on the Institute's classification of awards system;
- Facilitation of students to develop active citizenship skills through engagement in community Volunteering; participation in the Erasmus Student Society Network (ESN) and in Institute clubs and societies in order to underpin integration into the wider Institute community.

### **7.7 Transition to Digital Mobility (2021 – 2027):**

The Institute will undertake the necessary steps to implement digital mobility in accordance with the planned enhanced digitisation of Erasmus+ in the next cycle of the programme (2021 – 2027). This will include implementation of a European Student Card Initiative and creation

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of an Erasmus+ mobile app in accordance with National Agency for Erasmus guidelines. Transition will be made to online inter-institutional- and learning agreements, online nominations and acceptances as well as dissemination of online transcript of records via Erasmus Dashboard EWP (Erasmus Without Paper). The increased use of ICT will ease administrative paperwork and will assist students with Erasmus- application, with conducting the mobility and with reintegration to the Institute post-Erasmus.

### **7.8 Reporting function to the National Agency for Erasmus in Ireland:**

The Institute undertakes to complete all mandatory reporting assignments to the National Agency for Erasmus in Ireland which include: yearly KA103 application for Erasmus mobility; review and signing of awarded Institute Erasmus Grant by the legal representative; completion of Interim Report (January); report on up-to-date outbound mobility numbers (June); completion and submission of year-end Institutional Final Report (October); completion of data-encoding and online reporting on Student and Staff Mobility on the Mobility Tool portal, and attendance at National Agency for Erasmus annual in-service days.