

# Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

## Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014-2020



### Institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy.

The UGR has a strong commitment to internationalization of all its activities: teaching, research, knowledge transfer, innovation and outreach. Mobility for all sectors of the university and of all kinds plays a central role in the institutional international strategy. As a large, comprehensive university with considerable internal diversity, partners for each kind of international activity are chosen in each case according to their quality, similarity or complementarity with the UGR, and suitability for the specific action. For institutional-wide actions, particular value is placed on long-standing partners in networks, such as the Coimbra Group, or partners in the UGR excellence initiative, whereas for research-specific or teaching-specific actions each research group or Faculty establishes its own priorities.

The UGR has a long tradition of academic cooperation with different regions of the world. As a European university, it is fully integrated into the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area, and has extensive links with universities across the entire continent. Its geographical situation and history also make it an important crossroads for links with North Africa and the Mediterranean, and with Latin America; its long-standing commitment to cultural and linguistic competence and diversity materializes also in well established links with universities in Russia and other Eastern European countries, in China and in the English-speaking world. These links take the form of numerous mobility, double degree, joint research, and cooperation MoUs and projects of all kinds, many of them funded under the different actions of Lifelong Learning, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa and Edulink. Development cooperation projects aiming essentially at capacity building and institutional strengthening in developing countries is another important element of the UGR's international strategy, with priority given to strategic university partners recently chosen on the basis of consolidated partnerships and long-standing cooperative actions.

The UGR works actively to promote mobility of all sectors of the university, with varying aims and objectives. In recent years the university has occupied the leading position in outgoing and incoming Erasmus student mobility at European level and leading positions in teaching staff, non-teaching staff and placement mobility at national level. It is also a leading participant in Erasmus Mundus, in particular Action 2, and has a strong non-EU mobility programme financed by its own annual budget.

Outgoing student mobility contributes a valuable individual

learning experience for those participating, in academic, linguistic, cultural, professional and personal competences, and returning students together with incoming mobile students create a truly international campus for non-mobile students and staff, often known as internationalization at home (IaH). Although the bulk of student mobility takes place in first cycle (four years in Spain), the UGR makes a considerable effort to promote mobility at second and third cycle levels, through more structured mobility for Master's level given the very short one-year programmes, and with much freer mobility at third cycle level with a view to establishing sound foundations for future and further research cooperation, including co-tutelle agreements with partners, and an International Mention for doctoral degrees.

Alongside more traditional student mobility, the UGR promotes international placement mobility amongst its students. Short international placements beyond Europe and the EHEA countries are currently on offer and longer placements planned.

Similarly, a variety of short-term mobility actions for summer courses and practical or fieldwork are also promoted. Incoming teaching staff mobility is an important element in IaH, and an excellent opportunity for benchmarking and exchange of best practice in teaching and learning, as is outgoing teaching staff mobility and sharing of experiences on return. Additional opportunities for feedback for research cooperation also arise, adding to already active researcher mobility, supported by our Euraxess point. Non-teaching staff mobility is a further pillar of our international strategy, as a key element in the modernization of university management and administration.

The UGR has been participating in double and multiple degree programmes since 1989, and is now a partner in fourteen consortia at first and second cycle level, including four Erasmus Mundus Action 1a projects. There is an institutional protocol with advice and support for the design of double, multiple and joint degree programmes, encouraging prior study of viability through structured mobility and curriculum development projects, a small seed fund, together with specific funding for mobility once in place, in order to ensure sustainability.

**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 UGR combines a top-down and a bottom-up approach to project design and implementation. Thus, the Projects

Unit at the IO promotes participation and coordination of international projects by offering advice and support to individual members of staff wishing to submit international project applications; this support covers training seminars with external experts and individual counsel in the design of project applications and project management, including financial management. Seed funding is also available for project proposals to allow preparatory actions and meetings with partners.

Once approved, the Unit also offers technical support for the implementation of projects, and either undertakes or oversees the financial management. Similarly, the UGR also centrally identifies major policy issues on which it wishes to work at international level through project consortia. The Projects Unit designs and manages these institutional projects from the IO in different fields of academic cooperation: large mobility consortia such as Erasmus Mundus Action 2 with strategic geographical areas; analysis and design of policy issues such as widening access, quality of mobility, placements, virtual mobility, knowledge transfer and innovation, development cooperation, doctoral studies, transferable skills, intercultural competence and so on. This approach allows synergies to be sought between projects, particularly with partners from different geographical areas and sectors of society, hereto funded by separate programmes. It further allows continuity in project activities, guaranteeing sustainability of actions beyond limited project lifetime.

Both general and targeted dissemination is given of all new calls for applications and information days are held explaining different funding opportunities to teaching and non-teaching staff. Similarly, dissemination is given to projects underway and to the outcomes of finalized projects.

**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.**

In general, the Programme will allow advancement of individual learning opportunities through mobility and participation in strategic projects, all of which will then feed into the general overall modernization strategy of the UGR. It will also allow the attraction of talent and furtherance of innovative educational programmes in all three cycles. The design and implementation of strategic actions and projects will intensify positive outcomes in the five priorities as follows:

- Increasing attainment levels: the UGR is convinced of the added educational value of mobility for graduate attainment in generic competences and increased

employability and critical capacity. Active participation of all sectors of the university in mobility actions, including virtual mobility through enhanced use of ICT tools, will ensure better prepared graduates for the future. More flexible mobility will facilitate the participation of under-represented groups and those with family obligations.

- Increased intersectorial mobility will improve employability at all levels, with particular emphasis on doctoral graduates seeking employment outside academia.
- Improving the quality and relevance of higher education: international cooperation will provide ample opportunities for benchmarking and thus enhanced quality assurance with trusted partners. Non-teaching staff mobility will give incentives for innovative and productive professional development. Mobility and project activity will further the design and application of innovative approaches to teaching and learning at all levels and ensure greater societal relevance.
- Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation: participation in the programme and increased flexibility will consolidate progress towards the 20% mobility objective before 2020. It will further bilateral non-EU mobility, an important strategic objective for the UGR. It will continue to attract the best students and researchers from all over the world, with a significant increase in vertical mobility.
- Knowledge triangle: participation in the programme, together with the UGR excellence initiative, will further promote intersectorial mobility and projects, thus fomenting increased partnership and knowledge transfer (including start-ups and spin-offs) with business at regional, national and international level. Graduates with greater entrepreneurial and creative skills attained during mobility will contribute to regional development.
- Governance and funding: the Programme will offer extensive opportunities for benchmarking and exchange of best practice in university governance and management, particularly through teaching and non-teaching staff mobility, and the implementation of strategic projects with international partners for all levels of university management. Intersectorial cooperation will open windows of opportunity for the diversification of funding sources, particularly with the private sector.