



FH Salzburg

Erasmus Policy Statement

Strategy with respect to choosing partners, in which geographical areas, objectives and target groups

The Salzburg University of Applied Sciences (SUAS) offers bachelor and master programmes in the four disciplines of Engineering, Social Sciences and Economics, Media, Design and Art as well as Health Sciences. In defined areas, doctoral studies are possible through cooperation with partners. Partnerships in general are carefully selected. They are based on mutual trust, respect for cultural differences and are entered with the intention of added value for both partners. New partners must meet the defined criteria of high academic standards, adequate infrastructure and resources for mobility activities, potential for joint projects in research and teaching. Equally, existing partnerships are evaluated against these criteria and the extent of activities on a yearly basis. Geographically speaking, within Europe, English-speaking countries, Scandinavia and South-east Europe are focal areas. Globally, the Asia-Pacific region as well as North America are further target areas.

Participating in the Erasmus+ programme and overall in internationalization activities has 3 major objectives for the SUAS: i) most importantly, it takes the responsibility of preparing its graduates for their future workplaces in a globalized economy seriously and therefore wants to impart the requisite competences to its students, not least intercultural competence; ii) participating in European as well as international mobility and project activities is a major aspect of quality assurance through exposure to different learning and teaching styles as well as varied and enriching perspectives; iii) personality building and development of both students and staff through mobility and internationalisation activities are an important concern for SUAS.

In all first cycle curricula, mobility windows for students have been defined and work placements are a compulsory component. These work placements have a clearly defined objective and scope and can be carried out in national enterprises and abroad. Students on work placements abroad are especially supported through training and accompanying measures such as an intercultural diary during their stay abroad so that the intercultural competence gain can be sustainably secured and their reflective capacities supported.

All second cycle curricula include at least one course with a focus on intercultural communication and/or cross-cultural management and also offer the possibility of student exchange for study or research. 3 degree programmes (a bachelor and master programme in tourism, one master programme in applied signal processing) are fully taught in English and cater for international students, who constitute roughly 50% of the student cohorts in these programmes. More English-taught programmes are intended to be implemented.

Technology
Health
Media

As no third cycle programmes can be offered by Austrian universities of applied sciences, SUAS has entered partnerships with national and international universities to provide the possibility of doctoral studies for highly qualified students and as a measure of its own staff development.

SUAS currently operates three double degree programmes with a Swedish, a Japanese and an US university – all three serve as models for future double degree endeavours. They are considered an opportunity to provide pooled resources and enhanced expertise beneficial for all partners involved. A recent local cooperation with the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg resulted in a joint master degree in Applied Image & Signal Processing, which recruits students from across the globe and provides a blueprint for similar joint activities in other disciplines. In all these endeavours, rigorous quality assurance is a prerequisite to enter such a partnership.

Staff mobility for teaching and training purposes are actively encouraged and supported by SUAS as a measure of staff development and ensuring the high academic quality of its curricula. Staff mobility is integrated into researcher, teacher and administrative staff development strategies, also with respect to career advancement.

While mobility activities are seen as a pivotal factor of the internationalization strategy, Internationalization -at-Home (IAH) activities are regarded as equally relevant, especially in the face of the fact that not all students can be mobile. IAH at SUAS includes an international element in all curricula through course design and/or materials used, the recruitment of guest lecturers and guest professors on a wide scale as well as activities like tandem learning, international film, dance and cooking events and the organization of a yearly international week, to which all staff are invited to participate and interact with the incoming staff. Furthermore, SUAS has been selected as one of the four Austrian universities of applied sciences to be able to offer a Fulbright guest professorship from the academic year 2013/14 onwards. In general, support is provided for guest lecturers and guest professors, both before arrival and during their stay including accommodation and visa issues.

Strategy for organising and implementation of cooperation projects under Erasmus+

The SUAS has devised and implemented a strategy for research and the transfer of its results into the degree programmes, the scientific and the wider community, especially business partners, as well as the general public. Research activities are mainly in the applied sector and often in cooperation with industry and business partners. SUAS has been awarded one of the seven Austrian government and industry funded Josef Ressel Centres for research on the future-oriented topic of smart grids. Concentration on research topics in line with the four disciplines and the establishment of further competence centres are of strategic relevance. Additionally, it is an important objective at SUAS that research results also inform teaching. This is secured through the fact that researchers are generally also involved in teaching activities and thus ensure the continuous development of curricula and their integration of the state-of-the-art and latest developments in the respective discipline. A research coordinator has been implemented, who, together with the International Office, informs staff on cooperation possibilities within Erasmus+ and other funding schemes. This coordinator is also responsible for maintaining a website that promotes the results and links to all ongoing projects. As a quality assurance measure details of project activities are part of the yearly intellectual capital balance sheet.

Expected impact of participation in the new Erasmus+ programme with respect to 5 priorities and policy objectives we intend to achieve

Concerning the 5 priorities of the EU Modernisation and internationalisation agenda, SUAS intends to achieve the following policy objectives:

- 1) Through its Erasmus+ and internationalization activities it is expected that SUAS graduates will be equipped with the requisite domain specific skills as well as additional communication and social skills to make a career and useful contribution in their discipline regionally and internationally. SUAS aims at supporting their graduates in developing well-rounded personalities, who exercise their skills with discretion, respect for cultural differences and are aware of the impact of their actions and decisions on the environment.
- 2) As internationalization activities are regarded as an important quality assurance measure, it is expected that the active participation in the new Erasmus+ programme will constitute a major pillar in this endeavour. Operational measures in place to review and optimize the quality of teaching and the curricula always include the assessment of the impact of internationalization activities.
- 3) In line with the above stated objectives, the exchange of expertise through mobility and cross-border cooperation especially in research and joint teaching projects is envisaged to enhance the quality of teaching and ultimately the competence of its staff and graduates. Exposure to different learning and teaching approaches as well as varying perspectives on a topic is seen as essential for sustaining academic quality and staff motivation.
- 4) One strength of SUAS is its close ties with industry, business and regional authorities. It is expected that these strategic alliances will enable SUAS to participate in high-quality cooperation projects and make it an attractive partner under the new Erasmus+ programme.
- 5) Through staff mobility, it is expected that issues of governance and funding will be discussed and improved through peer learning. Joint cooperation projects will enable the pooling of resources and the possibility of additional curricular offers.