

# Erasmus Policy Statement

## Section 1 - Introduction

### Purpose

(1) This policy outlines the College's compliance with the [Erasmus Charter for Higher Education](#) and the principles by which it implements it in line with regulatory requirements.

### Scope

#### To whom does the policy apply?

(2) This policy applies to Hibernia College Staff and Faculty who wish to participate in Erasmus+ mobilities.

(3) This policy applies to the College Erasmus Coordinator and any personnel relevant to the approval of Staff and Faculty mobility through the Erasmus+ programme.

(4) This policy applies to the Academic Board and Executive Management Team (EMT) when approving partner institutions.

#### In what situations does the policy apply?

(5) This policy applies in all situations related to the implementation of the College's Erasmus Charter.

#### Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

(6) The Erasmus Coordinator, under the responsibility of the Department of the Dean, is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

(7) The Erasmus Committee is responsible for supporting the Erasmus Coordinator as required and for executing any additional duties delegated to it from the Academic Board.

(8) The Academic Dean, in consultation with the Erasmus Coordinator, relevant Heads of Department and Human Resources, is responsible for approving individual Staff and teacher mobilities with Erasmus Charter approved institutions.

### Definitions

(9) Erasmus+

(10) Mobility

## Section 2 - Context

### Legal and Regulatory Context

## **Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)**

(11) Any higher education institution (HEI) participating in learning mobility via Erasmus+ is required to apply for and obtain the [Erasmus Charter for Higher Education \(ECHE\)](#). The ECHE provides the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities that a HEI may carry out within Erasmus+.

(12) HEIs must respect all the provisions of the [ECHE](#) during the implementation of any Erasmus+ activity.

## **Higher Education Authority (HEA)**

(13) The HEA is the National Agency (Higher Education) for the EU Erasmus+ programme in Ireland. The College's compliance with the ECHE is monitored by the National Agency, the Higher Education Authority (HEA). Monitoring is undertaken in line with the [ECHE Monitoring Guide](#).

## **Hibernia College Context**

### **Hibernia College International Strategy**

(14) In accordance with [ECHE principles](#), Hibernia College is required to have an internationalisation strategy. This strategy is articulated through this published [Erasmus Policy Statement](#).

(15) The Hibernia College vision is to further develop our position as Ireland's leading provider of teacher education and to develop and create new educational opportunities making them accessible for the global learner.

(16) The College's mission is to provide equal education opportunities to students. Hibernia College delivers technology-enhanced and flexible programmes in order to prepare students for complex professional roles.

# **Section 3 - Policy Statements**

## **Part A - Principles for Erasmus**

### **The Erasmus Committee**

(17) The Erasmus Committee is an ad hoc committee convened as required to ensure continuity of the Erasmus+ programme in the College.

(18) The Erasmus Committee normally consists of the Erasmus Coordinator, the Academic Dean, a representative of the Finance Department and any other member of Staff deemed relevant to committee business, as required.

### **Selecting Partners**

(19) International partners are selected based on areas of mutual interest that aim to improve the quality of learning and teaching in common areas.

### **Equality of Access to Erasmus+ Activities**

(20) All Hibernia College Staff who meet the threshold criteria for selection are eligible to participate in the Erasmus+ programme.

### **Visibility**

(21) All documentation relating to Erasmus+, and the promotion of Erasmus+, is located in a shared Staff portal on the College's Web-based collaboration platform.

(22) To ensure effective communication of academic information to potential Erasmus+ participants, a dedicated international section on the website provides a detailed overview of live programmes in the College in areas such as:

- a. Learning outcomes
- b. Programme composition, including ECTS credits
- c. Student learning experience, including overview of delivery methodology

## **Part B - Objectives for Inward or Outward Staff Mobility**

(23) This section outlines the objectives for Erasmus+ in the context of Hibernia College. It is based on the objectives for Erasmus+ as set out in the [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#) and deemed relevant to the College. These relate to high-level Erasmus+ objectives, organisational specific objectives and individual objectives.

### **Erasmus+ Objectives**

(24) Improve the level of key competences and skills, with particular regard to their relevance for the labour market and their contribution to a cohesive society, in particular, through increased opportunities for learning mobility and through strengthened cooperation between the world of education and training and the world of work.

(25) Foster quality improvements, innovation excellence and internationalisation at the level of education and training institutions, in particular, through enhanced transnational cooperation between education and training providers and other stakeholders.

### **Organisational Objectives**

(26) Increase capacity to operate at EU/international level: improve management skills and internationalisation strategies; reinforce cooperation with partners from other countries; increase allocation of financial resources (other than EU funds) to organise EU/international projects; increase quality in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of EU/international projects.

(27) Develop innovative and improved ways of working with the College's target groups by providing, for example, more attractive programmes for students in line with their needs and expectations; improve qualifications of teaching and training Staff; improve processes of recognition and validation of competences gained during learning periods abroad; develop more effective activities for the benefit of local communities, improved youth work methods and practices to actively involve young people and/or to address disadvantaged groups, etc.

(28) To enhance the modern, dynamic, committed and professional environment within the College: ready to integrate good practices and new methods into daily activities; open to synergies with organisations active in different social, educational and employment fields; planning strategically the professional development of their Staff in relation to individual needs and organisational objectives.

### **Individual Outcomes**

(29) Improve competences, linked to participants' professional profiles (teaching, training, youth work, etc.).

(30) Develop a broader understanding of practices, policies and systems in education, training or youth work across countries.

(31) Increase capacity to trigger changes in terms of modernisation and international opening within individuals' educational organisations.

(32) Develop a greater understanding of interconnections between formal and non-formal education, vocational training and the labour market respectively.

- (33) Improve the quality of their work and activities in favour of students.
- (34) Develop a greater understanding and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity.
- (35) Increase their ability to address the needs of the disadvantaged.
- (36) Increase their support for and promotion of mobility activities for learners.
- (37) Increase their opportunities for professional and career development.
- (38) Increase their foreign language competences.
- (39) Increase their motivation and satisfaction in their daily work.

### **Promotion of Erasmus+ Within Hibernia College**

(40) The following activities are undertaken across the College to promote the Erasmus+ programme and to ensure our target mobility is undertaken:

- a. Integration with the College's learning and development programme for Staff
- b. A dedicated Erasmus+ site available on the College intranet maintained by the Erasmus Coordinator
- c. Ongoing support and promotion by the Erasmus Coordinator including dissemination of promotional materials and the promotion of dedicated Erasmus [Staff training weeks](#)
- d. Dissemination of learning and promotion by returning participants
- e. Presentations and sharing of learning by inward mobility participants

## **Section 4 - Principles for Selection of Erasmus+ Partner Institutions**

(41) In addition to aligning with the identified Erasmus+ and organisational objectives, selection may be based on, but not limited to, the following principles:

### **a. Institutional Profile**

- i. Expertise in professional, regulated higher education in a compatible field such as education or health sciences
- ii. Research profile
- iii. Use of innovative or blended learning, or interested in developing capacity in these areas
- iv. Interest in developing communities of practice and scholarship through Staff collaborations

### **b. Academic Standing**

- i. Evidence of an academic and management system suited to assuring the quality of educational provision
- ii. A history of Degree awarding provision under a nationally quality assured framework
- iii. Willingness to use the agreed Erasmus+ documentation

### **c. Student Supports**

- i. An orientation programme or equivalent is in place.
- ii. Exchange Staff and students will have access to all relevant generic facilities to support their period of

study, e.g. Library and IT.

- iii. Arrangements are in place for dealing with student appeals, complaints, misconduct, etc.
- iv. Arrangements are in place for pastoral support, counselling, etc.

#### d. **Programme Information**

- i. A credit system is in use.
- ii. Details of the proposed exchange programme can be provided, i.e. module descriptors or equivalent.
- iii. There will be an undertaking to provide assessments results in a timely manner.

#### e. **Geographical Areas**

- i. As a College with a focus on online and blended professional learning, the connections we seek to make are in our areas of expertise irrespective of geographical location, but our focus is on countries with a compatible educational context.

## **Section 5 - Principles Underpinning Individual Mobility Activities**

### **Outward Mobility**

#### **Principles Underpinning Approval of Outward Mobility**

(42) All Hibernia College Staff and Faculty taking part in Erasmus+ mobilities (who meet the threshold criteria) are selected in a fair and transparent way.

(43) Before College Staff and Faculty depart on Erasmus+ mobilities, the participants must have agreed on a mobility programme with the sending and receiving institution.

(44) The College ensures the selection and grant award procedure is fair, transparent, coherent and documented and is made available to all parties involved in the selection process.

(45) The College ensures the selection criteria are available to Staff on the College's Web-based collaboration platform.

(46) The College takes the necessary measures to prevent any conflict of interest during the selection process.

#### **Threshold Criteria for Participants**

(47) Applicants must normally be permanent employees of the College.

(48) Applicants should normally have at least one year of service with the College.

(49) Preference may be given to applicants who are not in receipt of funding for other professional development opportunities.

#### **Contribution to the College**

(50) The proposed visit must:

- a. Align to the Hibernia College strategic vision
- b. Contribute to the College across at least one of the following areas:

- i. Developments or enhancements specific to a provider of online or blended higher education
  - ii. Effective governance or management of an independent, for-profit, higher education institution
  - iii. Growing our expertise and reputation in using technology in higher education
  - iv. Growing our expertise and reputation related to current programme offerings such as effective teacher education
- c. Contribute to wider Staff development through the dissemination and application of learning

### **Contribution to the Individual**

(51) The proposed visit must be relevant to the development of the individual's role in Hibernia College.

(52) It must also be relevant to the continuing professional development of the individual.

### **Contractual Obligations**

(53) Participation in the Erasmus+ programme may not negatively affect the participant's performance of their usual duties or the wider work of the College.

(54) Participation in the Erasmus+ programme does not confer any special rights or responsibilities on participants other than those specific to the Erasmus+ programme.

### **Inward Mobilities**

#### **Approval of Inward Mobility**

(55) The College will only consider requests from institutions, or individuals associated with institutions, that are participant members of the Erasmus+ programme and can demonstrate that they hold an up-to-date Erasmus+ Charter.

(56) The College will consider requests for inward mobility from institutions or individuals whose requests align with the College strategic vision.

(57) Priority will be given to requests from organisations who have hosted a visit from a Hibernia College Staff member.

(58) The proposed visit must not negatively impact the work of the hosting department.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	2nd November 2020
<b>Review Date</b>	2nd November 2023
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Board
<b>Approval Date</b>	23rd September 2020
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Quality Assurance

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Applicant"** - An applicant is a person who has submitted an application to undertake a programme of study with the College.

**"Policy"** - Policies are principled statements adopted by the College at a high level to enable decisions about actions and desired outcomes to which the College is committed. They clearly articulate the formal position of the College on specific issues in order to guide internal decision-making. Policies set out 'what to do' on a given issue. They have a medium- to long-term review cycle.

**"Programme"** - A programme of education and training refers to any process by which learners may acquire knowledge, skill or competence. It includes courses of study or instruction, apprenticeships, training and employment. A programme offers learners the learning opportunities by which they may attain educational goals (expressed as the intended programme learning outcome) by learning activities in a learning environment. A programme is normally comprised of modules. A programme leading to a major award will normally require a 'cohesion generating' process which integrates constituent modules so that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes are supported. The cohesion generating process should establish the epistemological and cultural identity of the programme. It should also coordinate alignment of activities with the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and introduce learners to the broader community of practice to which they aspire. (QQI (2013) Assessment and Standards Revised)

**"Erasmus+"** - Erasmus+ is the EU programme for mobility in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014–2020 and all successor programmes. (Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC)

**"Mobility"** - Mobility, in the current context of Erasmus+ at Hibernia College, is the ability for staff to travel freely to other participating higher education institutes for the purposes of professional development and collaboration.