Erasmus Policy Statement

1) Please describe your institution’s international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees.

The International University of Applied Science Bad Honnef · Bonn (IUBH) aims at highest standards in teaching and research at all levels and in all departments of its organization. Its mission statement highlights internationalization as one of the major objectives of the university and we are continuously in search of excellence within our international teaching and learning environment. In line with this objective, the university intends to focus its Erasmus activities on student and staff mobility, continuing to participate in thematic networks and in further developing ERASMUS activities and visibility.

IUBH is a university which is very much integrated in the international university community. The development and cultivation of the international IUBH partner network has been and continues to be key to the success of the IUBH study programmes, all of which include international components both abroad and at home. By 2016 we plan to offer at least one international study abroad opportunity to each of our students. In order to achieve this goal, IUBH is continually looking for further EU and non-EU partners.

The university has a number of well-established Erasmus staff and student mobility programmes from which students and staff continue to benefit; they have been able to learn and teach in different institutional surroundings, sharing knowledge and ideas and generally broadening their horizons. In order to strengthen the internationalization the university will foster further ERASMUS exchanges in these and in new areas, supporting academic staff in contributing to exchange programmes in Europe and around the world.

Our partner university development and expansion process is driven by our primary aim of improving our students’ academic and practical competencies. In every IUBH study programme a set of competencies is determined, which should be gained in the international arena. Therefore in considering co-operations with further international Universities, our focus lies on the academic programmes they offer and how these can complement IUBH curricula. Where appropriate, further areas of exchange such as staff exchange or joint research activities are evaluated and developed.
The focal point in our partner network development therefore continues to be curricular relevance and expected quality of inter-institutional understanding, commitment and communication. In an effort to ensure that student exchange has a realistic perspective within a potential new partnership which we wish to be active, the organizational framework of potential new partners is also considered (semester dates, tuition fees, organisational aspects of exchange and so on) as a further important criteria.

As a University of Applied Sciences whose language of instruction is English and where the expectation of students is to be able to maintain their academic level while studying abroad and therefore to be able to study in a language in which they have sufficient proficiency, English-speaking countries such as Australia, the United States and the UK remain in our focus. However, as a HEI which recognizes the importance of geographic and hence cultural variety of study abroad locations we aim to provide a broad variety of European and non-European inter-cultural and linguistic study abroad opportunities. In the spirit of European understanding and exchange, we aim to further expand our partner network to Southern and Eastern Europe.

In order to increase choice and reduce the size of student groups to any one particular partner university, we have expanded and continue to develop the options available to students of our dual degree programmes within which all of our students spend one academic year abroad. With many years of experience in development and implementation of successful international dual degree programmes an important part of our partner network development will continue to lie here. Experience gained and competence grown within these programmes will help to grow further co-operations within which both academic and practical mobility factors are given due consideration.

IUBH Study programmes within which the variety of mobility options is lower than in others are also constantly being developed to raise international mobility. Furthermore with heightened level of interest in our master programmes, IUBH is looking to develop international mobility opportunities at master level.

2) **If applicable, please describe your 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. (max. 2000 characters)**

Through the exchange of ideas and best practice with partners around the world, in working closely with each other on exchange projects at many levels, in guiding staff and students, solving problems and meeting challenges of changing expectations and market requirements together, developing joint curricula and teaching concepts, we are able to more easily identify means of further international development and improvement of our programmes.
The dynamics of international education within international co-operations and projects give us a better understanding of what our students’ expectations and needs are and commit us to move with the momentum of this modernisation.

IUBH academic staff has been and continues to be involved in international staff mobility at many levels and the experience and knowledge gained through these activities flows into the development and implementation of our programmes.

This academic staff mobility will help to guarantee that IUBH’s academic staff is aware of the forces that drive modern, European curricula. We continually consider and learn through programmes offered at other European and international institutions in the relevant fields and are able to include new aspects and teaching concepts in practice at partner universities.

Constant evaluation and benchmark activities in all programmes within various programmes including the ERASMUS programme make sure that IUBH’s curricula and teaching concepts are state-of-the-art.

3) Please explain the 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. (max. 3000 characters)

The ERASMUS programme is a logical cornerstone of any institution of Higher Education committed to European and international educational development and IUBH expects to further enhance, professionalize and modernize its international co-operations and projects at many levels both in Europe and beyond in the context of the new Programme generation (2014-2020) which lies ahead.

We recognize the opportunities the programme presents both in being able open up mobility options for many through financial assistance and in providing comprehensive information and wide-reaching networks within the ERASMUS community and in providing scope for our contribution to international educational projects.

Within the continual quality evaluation and review of our study programmes we have been developing ways in which to encourage and support access to our programmes, for example through specific foundation and pathway programmes. In particular in the context of projects within our industry partner network, we have been and continue to improve ways for people with non-academic backgrounds to participate in our programmes through recognition of the past professional achievements in relevant industries.

All IUBH programmes refer in structure and content to the Bologna process and enable graduates to work and learn in a European environment. Exchange activities make sure that this quality aspect will constantly be benchmarked with
European partners. IUBH is planning to increase its research activities along the European framework in order to participate in Europe’s efforts to keep pace in the global competition.

In developing links within the knowledge triangle between education, research and business, IUBH contributes in shaping excellent careers and economic growth. In addition to our international co-operations, strong links with regional research organisations and local international firms enable us to incorporate research results and innovative practice in our study programmes and benefit from these co-operations in being able to provide our students with internship and job entry opportunities. They contribute in shaping and delivering parts of our study programmes and ensure that within these our students are able to develop the competencies the labour market requires.

Throughout the next programme generation IUBH will focus on:

- Developing the university network for student mobility to integrate IUBH into the European effort to internationalize academic education and support the integration of the European labor market

- Continuing the internationalization of curricula and teaching by hosting lecturers from Erasmus partner institutions

- Increasing the participation of its academic staff in international, especially European research projects

- Developing joint programmes with partner institutions aiming for further joint or dual degrees

- Reporting on Erasmus activities within the IUBH Annual Academic Report