

1. ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

1.1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff

Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Partnerships for Innovation

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation:

X

1.2 Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the

goal of building a European Education Area¹ and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Karel de Grote University of Applied Sciences and Arts (KdG) stands for sustainable development, for students, staff and society. Our alumni, students and staff take responsibility in creating a sustainable society.

KdG competences. Key KdG competences to achieve for both students and staff members in order to make a meaningful contribution to society are (1) intercultural (including international) competences, (2) motivation and self-management skills, (3) mobility of the mind, (4) entrepreneurial spirit and (5) co-creation. The Erasmus+ framework, offering international mobility and intercultural exchange, is a helpful and important tool in the development of all of these competences, particularly the intercultural and international competences. Instead of advocating a stand-alone Internationalisation policy, our ambition is to move towards a more comprehensive and embedded approach of Internationalisation. As University of Applied Sciences and Arts, KdG focusses on four central tasks, determined by decree: education, practice-oriented research, knowledge transfer to society and practice of the arts. Internationalisation is a transversal theme embedded in those four core assignments.

KdG internationalisation strategy. KdG defined five specific internationalisation strategies:

(1) Embed internationalisation in our curricula and services in order to reach all KdG students and staff members. As part of its education policy, KdG developed the 'KdG quality code for education', which prescribes each curriculum to have an international dimension. The curriculum is seen as the most important vehicle to reach all KdG students. Our continuous work on the internationalisation of our curricula, including further development of a qualitative English learning environment, will enable us to attract more incoming international students in the future and will keep us on the map as an interesting exchange partner within Europe (and beyond; see also (3)).

(2) Increase the number and quality of outgoing student mobilities.

(3) Increase the number and quality of incoming student mobilities in order to achieve a good balance between incoming and outgoing mobility.

(4) Increase the number and quality of staff mobilities (both academic and support staff), as well as support their participation in international activities and networks.

(5) Increase the number of international partnerships and projects in which we engage, as well as enhance our existing partnerships.

International mobility (both physical and virtual mobility) is more than a goal: when done right (cf. ECHE guidelines), it is a powerful means to an end. It helps develop intercultural and internationally competent students and staff members who can face and act upon the challenges of today's world and contribute in a positive way (i.e. mobility of the mind').

KdG Modernisation agenda. Recently, KdG defined six Strategic Programmes (SPs), with dedicated resources, to focus on in the next years.

(SP1) The development and profiling of our study programme portfolio. Based on the needs of our VUCA society, KdG adjusts and re-invents its educational offer and services to society, addressing our students, staff, alumni and external stakeholders. As part of this programme, one project aims at developing more English-taught internationally oriented programmes as well as centralising and intensifying our services to better support the international student journey (ranging from improved international communication, marketing and recruitment to admissions and international student support services).

(SP2) Stimulating diversity. KdG helps students and staff prepare to study, live and work in the super-diverse society. Diversity and inclusion go hand in hand. Part of this programme specifically focusses on diversity in recruitment and selection of staff (also developing an international staff recruitment strategy; cf. SP1).

(SP3) Building a powerful network. Developing strong partnerships, through cooperation and networking, offers tremendous value to our education and Practice-oriented Research (and vice versa). Our partners (students, staff, alumni, colleagues and other stakeholders) are our best ambassadors.

(SP4) Digital transformation. Smart use of data and technology, as important drivers for lifelong learning and innovation in our society and work settings, and creating more quality time for human interaction.

¹ For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website:
https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

(SP5) Personal leadership. In our VUCA society, addressing and stimulating individual responsibility is essential: 'How will YOU make a difference?' This programme focusses on both the organisational structure as well as culture to help improve personal leadership for both students and staff.

(SP6) Quality of support services. This programme will result in a quality code for support services. It is closely linked to SP4 and to the targets set for improving support for international students (cf.SP1).

The Erasmus framework and underlying activities will enable us to reinforce our internationalisation strategy and modernisation agenda, both quantitatively and qualitatively. It contributes both directly and indirectly to all five internationalisation strategies and to the key competences KdG values so highly (as shown in the participant reports of the current Erasmus programme). Undoubtedly, the programme is also an important financial resource and provides a qualitative framework for deepened international partnerships, innovative projects across the European Education Area, professionalisation of staff, and for exchanges in terms of teaching, study and internships abroad. The programme helps us setting up an adequate and future proof learning and work environment, supported by digital tools (like Erasmus Without Paper).

Participation in European and international projects (e.g. Erasmus KA2, KA3) is at the core of KdG's internationalisation strategy. By cooperating with partners in a strategic way that is in coherence with our organisation's ambitions and in line with European policy and with geographic and thematic priorities, KdG aims to create a positive sustainable impact within our organisation, the project partners, the professional field and the wider society. Cooperation in projects provides various opportunities, such as strengthening our research and innovation capacity, increasing the ability (at different levels in the organisation) to cooperate internationally, participating in networks and improving education practices.

In addition to cooperation with European partners, KdG also highly values cooperation with partners outside of Europe. KdG builds onto strong existing partnerships but also looks for new opportunities. For the latter, the following indicators are in use to guide our search and develop relations with partners in strategic geographic areas: (1) history of the cooperation, (2) relevancy (range of educational programmes and level, labour market, research and Knowledge transfer to society), (3) safety and political stability of the country/region, and (4) coherence to Belgian and Flemish country/geographic policies. Several regional (VLIR-UOS) and EU funding schemes (Erasmus KA107) will be applied to explore new cooperation and develop a basis to further build onto. For the more established partnerships, KdG intends to apply for other funds within the Erasmus framework (Erasmus KA2) to create a more substantial and more sustainable impact.

The planned Erasmus activities encourage the realisation that our identity, and that of others, needs not to be defined by our nationality, an important notion in today's super-diverse and global society. To adequately address current and future global challenges and opportunities, KdG is committed to help prepare students and staff by providing and supporting an inclusive and intercultural learning environment. The Erasmus framework (providing a broad range of Erasmus activities, following the ECHE principles) offers important support and guidance: it helps to ensure this is done in a qualitative way, towards a more sustainable society. As an organisation, KdG benefits from the exposure given through the Erasmus activities, in becoming internationally known as a University of Applied Sciences and Arts offering high quality in education, practice-oriented research and knowledge transfer to society as well as practice of the arts. The leading question KdG poses to all is: 'How will you make a difference?'

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

KdG holds the ambition to continue and broaden active participation in all of the Erasmus+ actions mentioned above, guided by the ECHE principles as a lens to offer quality in any of the activities.

Individual learning mobilities (KA1).

KdG values the curriculum as the most important gateway to reach all students, and thus to help them develop intercultural competences (see above, 'KdG' competences). Embedding an international dimension in each curriculum can be done in many ways. Creating the opportunity for students to engage in individual learning mobility (so-called: 'mobility windows') is where the Erasmus Key Action 1 activity plays a crucial role. Teaching and support staff benefit from the means and framework to (1) set up partnerships for a meaningful exchange for students and colleagues, (2) engage in qualitative international cooperation, networks and projects (see below), (3) strengthen their competences and (4) bring back their experiences into the KdG learning environment, to share with the KdG community.

As KdG advocates inclusive mobility, financial support (e.g. the Erasmus grant), is ensured to all students providing a qualitative and valid Erasmus application (regardless of previous study results). KdG devotes special attention to students from underrepresented groups. Each of our departments is financially supported to engage in Erasmus activities for both students and staff, and to set up qualitative activities to ensure the mobilities are well embedded in the curricula (via Key Action 1 - Organisation Support).

KdG's ambition to improve the international student journey (such as visa support, social and housing services; see above) is partly supported by Key Action 1 Organisational Support as it actively contributes to the realisation of the Erasmus charter and principles. Its implementation across different existing support services at KdG is one of the steps taken towards more embedded internationalisation (cf. our institutional strategy).

European and International partnerships (KA2).

Partnerships are crucial to develop meaningful cooperation (e.g. between higher education, professional field and society), setup benchmarks (within higher education) and broadly stimulate innovation. They contribute significantly to KdG's four core assignments: education, practice-oriented research, knowledge transfer to society and practice of the arts, and to the creation of a sustainable society (see KdG institutional strategy). KdG intends to participate in the following activities:

(1) Partnerships for the exchange of good practices: as this funding scheme is geared explicitly toward School Education it is KdG's Teacher Education programme and the Center of Expertise Urban Education that intend to participate in projects and further build upon already established partnerships

(2) Partnerships for innovation: KdG aims to cooperate with European and international partners of different types to create opportunities such as developing new curricula, methods and techniques, empowering research & innovation, increasing networks, exchanging students and staff and developing new internationalisation strategies. These partnerships provide a good stepping stone towards other project types such as Partnerships for excellence-European Universities.

(3) Partnerships for excellence – European Universities: KdG intends to further intensify qualitative cooperation experiences with strategic partners in KA1 and KA2 activities, possibly via more elaborated cooperation, as in a European University Network.

In addition to cooperation in projects with European partners, KdG also highly values cooperation with partners outside of Europe. KdG builds onto strong existing partnerships but also looks for new opportunities (see above). For the more established partnerships, KdG aims at other project opportunities (such as capacity building projects) to create a more substantial and sustainable impact.

Support to policy development and cooperation (KA3).

As KA3 projects are based upon European policies and needs, KdG stays tuned about the developments in the European Education Area. Project calls with specific relevance to KdG's strategic ambitions and capacities, will be further explored.

Organisational structure of internationalisation at KdG.

KdG's institutional strategy is a dynamic proces of co-creation, led by a central Strategy team. Internationalisation is a transversal theme within KdG's four core assignments (see above).

Embedding an international dimension in the curriculum (such as an international exchange) lies within the responsibility of each study programme. At decentral level (study programme or department level), Internationalisation is serviced by Educational Supports Officers, an International Coordinator (follow-up of the specific Internationalisation strategies) and International Mobility Officers. At central level, Internationalisation is supported by many services, in particular: (1) the Educational Development Office, concerned with the quality of our education, (2) the International Office and (3) a cross-functional team tasked with improving services to international students, including members of Admissions (Student Administration office), International Recruitment, Marketing & Communications as well as Student Services.

The international dimension in our research and knowledge transfer on the one hand, and art practice on the other hand, is the responsibility of our Office for Research & Knowledge Transfer and Sint-Lucas School of Arts respectively, with close ties to KdG's International Office and the central Strategy Team.

In European and international projects, the central International Office cooperates with staff, lecturers and researchers at a decentral level. Project ideas can be brought forward by KdG's lecturers, researchers and our regional and international network, as well as at central level focussing on the realisation of KdG's modernisation and internationalisation agenda.

In the present programme, KdG aims to professionalise its project support and management in order to improve the response to project opportunities, to facilitate project teams (and the recognition of their work) and hence to increase sustainable impact. Together with all Flemish Universities of Applied Sciences (and Arts) and their umbrella organisation, Vlhora, KdG is developing a Digital Open Science Platform (DOSP) that includes digital tools for projects management.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2

action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

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KdG defined five specific internationalisation strategies (i.e. targets), each of which is supported by different Erasmus activities (see above):

(1) Embed internationalisation in all curricula and services in order to reach all KdG students and staff members (i.e. internationalisation@home), and creating opportunities for incoming students and staff (see also (3)). As of Academic Year 2019-2020, our curricula are evaluated through the lens of the newly developed 'KdG quality code of education', which prescribes each curriculum to have an international dimension. Our continuous work on the internationalisation of our curricula, including further development of English-taught internationally oriented programmes and a qualitative English learning environment, will enable us to attract more incoming international students, and will keep us on the map as an interesting exchange partner within Europe (and beyond; see also (2) and (3)).

(2) Increase the number and quality of outbound student mobilities. KdG continues to promote, facilitate and support short and long-term high-quality mobility of its students throughout their entire study programme. Via information, selection, support and guidance, KdG guarantees every student optimal opportunities for successfully completing their foreign studies or traineeship. We aim at 100% interculturally competent students (through our curricula, international classrooms & study environment), of which at least 20% graduate with an exchange experience abroad (KdG strategic indicator, following EU-benchmark).

(3) Increase the number and quality of incoming student mobilities in order to achieve **a good balance between incoming and outgoing mobility.** Inviting students from different cultural backgrounds into our programmes, both online or on campus, in and outside the classroom, will also provide for a (culturally) richer learning environment (i.e. the international classroom) for both local and international students as well as staff.

(4) Increase the number and quality of staff mobilities (both academic and support staff), as well as **support participation in international activities, networks and collaborations.** KdG commits to value the international dimension as part of the job and to further develop HR policy towards better support and recognition of staff mobilities. Previous Erasmus+ participants reports show that international mobility is an important source of inspiration for staff members and contributes to both their professional and personal development (cf. KdG's lifelong learning ambition). Supporting our staff towards engaging in Erasmus+ activities is vital in creating a strong international brand for KdG, and in building towards a truly strategic and qualitative partner network for exchange (of students, staff and expertise). The Erasmus+ framework allows our staff members to develop into essential agents of internationalisation towards our students, colleagues as well as regional partners and businesses.

(5) Increase the number of international partnerships and projects in which KdG engages, as well as enhance our existing partnerships, by cooperating in various types of international projects (Erasmus+ and others; see the previous box on participation in KA2 and 3). KdG staff will continue to play an active part in national and international working groups (e.g. EAIE, COIL), sector-specific communities (such as Businet, ETEN) as well as different forums in higher education. This helps to disseminate relevant project results aimed at the sustainable development of our students, staff, organisation and society.

Additionally, a set of both quantitative and qualitative internationalisation indicators is monitored at Flemish level, for all Universities of Applied Sciences to benchmark and to disseminate results together (such as student and staff exchange rates and conditions, and amount and type of international projects we engage in).