

# UCL Erasmus+ Policy Statement

Partners, stakeholders and interested parties are kindly advised that since the award of the ECHE to UCL, our institutional and international strategies have been revised and relaunched. Additionally, minor restructuring also means that there are parts of the policy statement which make reference to offices which no longer exist.

Whilst a review of the Erasmus+ Policy Statement takes place with a view to updating it with current strategic priorities, would readers please note of the following changes:

- The International Strategy has now been superseded by the [Global Engagement Strategy](#)
- UCL White Paper 2011-2021 has been superseded by [UCL 2034](#)
- The Office for International Affairs has now been superseded by the [Global Engagement Office](#)

## Overall Strategy

International partnerships and mobility of students/staff are major areas of strategic change underway at UCL. A key aim of the International Strategy 2012 - 2017 is to extend UCL's international partnerships in education, research, business and healthcare, and with the global development sector, governments, charities and philanthropists. UCL currently has 811 existing international agreements, of which 577 are with participating countries. The Vice-Provost (International), supported by the Office of International Affairs, works with Faculties to review current collaborations and align new partnerships with the overall strategic focus. Emphasising quality, sustainability and strategic impact, regional strategies as developed by the Pro-Provosts (including the Pro-Provost for Europe and Central Asia) are developed, identifying priority areas of collaboration and preferred partners—centres of excellence that share UCL's goals and rigour in research and education, and offer particular opportunity to combine complementary expertise. Europe remains the primary region for UCL collaborations.

UCL collaboration with the Max Planck Society (Germany) and AVIESAN (France) are examples of significant research partnerships which lay the foundation for strategically aimed exchanges of staff and students. The [UCL European Research and Development Office](#) provides a wide range of professional services related to European funded research and innovation across the institution. Partnerships in other world regions, such as the Middle East, Latin America, China and India, are also growing. UCL is particularly interested in global consortia, ie partnering with institutions in Europe and outside Europe, which can further the potential of collaborations. The widening geographical scope of UCL partnerships is demonstrated by the new interdisciplinary [Arts and Sciences BASc](#) programme, in which all students study a foreign language, and which offers year-abroad options in Europe, Australia, Asia, North America and Latin America. Placing an international dimension at the heart of the student experience is one of the 6 key aims of the International Strategy. Currently, 25% of UCL undergraduates spend time abroad as part of their study, with a range of countries within and beyond Europe. By 2017, UCL

intends to enable 35% of its undergraduates to do so. As more UCL students travel abroad, the number of students coming from other institutions to UCL will increase. UCL uses the ECTS to facilitate mobility. UCL students' interest in study abroad is increasing. Thus, UCL is expanding the number of undergraduate student exchange agreements, both within and outside of Europe, enabling more opportunities to study abroad for credit. Erasmus exchanges will continue to be core to this area.

Along with strategic criteria, exchange partners will also reflect specific areas of academic focus. Regarding Masters programmes, additional dual degree/multiple degree programmes are being developed. These collaborative programmes allow a natural pairing of UCL's one-year Masters programmes with two-year Masters programmes in partner institutions, for example in the successful Dual Masters Brain and Mind Sciences that UCL offers with University Pierre et Marie Curie and Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. Where there is a strong strategic institutional purpose and a unique opportunity to synthesise partners' expertise, Joint Masters programmes are undertaken, such as the flourishing [International Masters in Economy, State and Society \(IMESS\)](#), led by UCL and supported by Erasmus Mundus. As a leading research university, UCL prioritises research degree collaboration, linking it to developing global research networks and strategic partnerships. For UCL, the most fortuitous collaborations in this area continue to be sandwich PhD programmes and short-term doctoral exchanges.

In addition to credit-bearing mobility, UCL is developing other international activities such as the UCL Summer School and overseas internships for Masters students. UCL views overseas opportunities for academic and administrative staff as key to furthering a global outlook and related expertise. UCL take-up in the Erasmus staff training mobility scheme has expanded dramatically in the past few years. Over the next few years, mobility of teaching staff will be promoted more vigorously, not only through Erasmus, but also in other programmes, such as the UCL-funded [International Teaching Excellence Bursaries](#) programme. UCL also aims to offer more overseas secondments to its staff.

## Strategy for the organisation and implementation of international cooperation projects in teaching and training

UCL's White Paper (2011-2021) highlights the university's commitment to being a global leader in enterprise and open innovation, supporting and promoting effective knowledge exchange, innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration with commercial and social enterprises. Central to UCL's approach is partnership between enterprise, universities and government. Additionally, employability and entrepreneurship of UCL graduates is integrated into a range of UCL's strategies and activities, knowledge transfer is a fundamental element of UCL's work in this area. UCL has an extensive history of successful Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), involving businesses of all sizes and sectors accessing academic expertise from across a wide subject base. KTPs enable recently qualified graduates (Associates) to facilitate the transfer of academic knowledge into partner companies. Employed by UCL, the Associate works within the company and is jointly supervised by company personnel and a senior academic. UCL has and will continue to participate in Knowledge Alliances, such as the EAC-funded EDUCCKATE project, led by UCL.

Alongside strong partnerships in Europe, UCL's growing portfolio of collaborations outside of Europe is also a major focus. The International Strategy pinpoints developing strategic relationships with global companies and creating international school and college educational outreach partnerships as two important objectives. Where these activities can involve to capacity-building initiatives, UCL includes them on the agenda.

## Expected impact of UCL Erasmus+ Projects

**Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs:** UCL provides special support for access to higher education, participation and successful graduation of students. The UCL Outreach Office enables widening participation, with activities for school children and mature students. The UCL Transition Programme helps all new undergraduates to adapt to university life. Doctoral students are supported through a wide array of skills training in line with national guidelines. UCL has a continually developing scholarship strategy and a range of agreements with sponsors internationally.

**Improving quality and relevance of higher education:** [UCL's e-learning strategy](#) stresses the quality of the student experience. UCL is developing new ways to use distance and blended learning e.g. CPD, and to enhance existing modes of study. UCL has the highest number of doctoral training centres (DTCs) in the UK, which fund doctoral students and support multi-disciplinarity and excellence in research. The skills agenda is central to UCL degree programmes, and a main focus of the UCL Career Services.

**Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation:** The UCL student experience is broader than academic endeavour. Particular focus is placed on integrating global citizenship into the learning and university community experience and enhancing students employability. Transferable skills are incorporated into the curriculum and part of the UCL culture. Opportunities to bring these elements into partnership activity are high on UCL's agenda, as is increasing the volume of student and staff mobility. UCL's cross-border collaborations e.g. Marie Curie networks allow students and institutions to innovate and build cross-cutting and lasting communities.

**Making the knowledge triangle work:** Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development: These partnerships are crucial. Stressing simplification and innovation, UCL enhances links between research technology organisations, industry and SMEs e.g. leading role in the Vision2020: The Horizon Network initiative. UCL's approach is to integrate all actors in the chain, to provide continuity and sustainability beyond funding cycles. Major UCL partnerships, e.g. League of European Research Universities, enable the university to contribute to development of regional vision, activity and results. UCL Consultants connects experts with national and international organisations, to resolve specific, targeted problems or gain critical advantage in the market.

**Improving governance and funding:** UCL values transparency about how to access funding through a competitive and fair process. Through professional services such as the UCL European Research and Development Office, support is in place to simplify funding processes and assist with planning and management of collaborations.