

Erasmus Policy statement of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona 2021-2027

Internationalization is a fundamental tool to attain the missions of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). One of the missions of the UAB is to offer a high quality education level to students, because quality and excellence are clear goals in the duties of the University. By means of mobility, students can enhance their academic performance, due to the fact that internationalization allows them to achieve different competencies and to be concerned citizens and better professionals in the future. The international strategy of the UAB is based in the improvement of quality. This internationalization process aims to achieve the following goals: quality in teaching and learning (internationalised, multidisciplinary); internationally accredited research with local and global impact; knowledge transfer to society through valorisation and innovation; responsible management of the resources and internationalising the campus; and international networking and international impact.

The UAB is participating in all typologies of Erasmus actions with universities and in regions all over the world, selected under a strategic perspective. UAB participates in the 3 biggest international conferences in higher education (HE): APAIE, NAFSA and EAIE. UAB is a full member of **ECIU** and **YERUN** (2 of the European HE networks); and **EUA**, the biggest HE association in Europe. These memberships are a very fruitful arena to design and develop all the Erasmus activities with international partners.

The various actions enable UAB to develop quality in teaching and learning through exchanges and mobility agreements; quality in research and innovation through training and development projects. UAB has 3 specific units devoted to support students, faculty, administrative staff and researchers in their international projects; namely: the Area of International Relations (ARI), the Employability Service (SO) and the International Projects Office (OPI). Thanks to these offices, the UAB has increased the number and quality of international actions under Erasmus.

UAB also wants to be a relevant actor playing a role in the definition and development of public policies, both nationally and internationally. There are 3 international offices in Brussels financed by the international networks that UAB belongs to (ECIU, YERUN and A4U). UAB is also member of **Alianza 4 Universidades** (A4U) formed by the 4 best-positioned universities in Spain. This alliance has a specific international portfolio, which includes a joint participation in KA107 in many countries.

For the next coming years, it might be relevant to mention ECIU University (one of the 17 nominated projects of the first call for European Universities), a privileged environment to develop the various Erasmus projects in which UAB aims to participate.

The envisaged impact of our participation in the Erasmus+ Programme:

- ✓ **Quality in teaching and learning:** increase on English teaching, innovative teaching methods (challenge based learning, interdisciplinary), new formats (micro-credentials, micro-modules, blended learning), new opportunities (internships, placements). During the ECIU University project most of these will be piloted and monitored (2019-2022). After this period, most of these actions will be institutionalised.
- ✓ **Internationally accredited research with local and global impact:** UAB is strongly committed with the idea of connecting Erasmus actions with the European research framework programme actions (Horizon Europe). It is intended to connect mobility actions and educational programme actions with the international activity of UAB researchers (i.e. connecting KA107 with KA2, and these 2 with **Horizon Europe** projects. UAB is currently developing connections between KA107 and KA2 and the connections between Erasmus and European Research Council (ERC) projects. These 2 UAB strategic actions are being monitored as the basis to institutionalisation during Horizon Europe period.
- ✓ **Knowledge transfer to society through valorisation and innovation:** the UAB is engaged on guaranteeing that the knowledge generated by the education, research and innovation projects, is clearly connected with society.

The strategic communities of research (COREs) are key instruments both to articulate different research groups and to connect them with societal needs and with society. All research groups include the connection with society in all Erasmus projects, in accordance to UAB research and education strategic guidelines.

- ✓ **Responsible management of the resources** and internationalising the campus: UAB is strongly committed to responsible management of the resources through various strategies:
 - Promotion and information of all kinds of calls (mobility, educational programmes, etc.): sectorial meetings and information sessions about calls
 - Efforts on executing the maximum percentage of available resources in order to promote the maximum number of mobilities and educational activities.
 - Rational and strategical alignment of selection criteria from the UAB institutional mobility call and the various Erasmus calls: age and seniority, synergies with other projects, sustainability of the activities, impact on teaching and research activities.
 - Permanent coordination with mobility officers from the different faculties.
- ✓ **International networking and international impact:** international networks brings a unique opportunity of participating in Erasmus projects in a much easier and efficient way. It eases mobility management among network members through stable and reliable alliances.

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By means of mobility, students can enhance their academic performance, due to the fact that internationalization allows them to achieve different competencies and to be better persons and better professionals in the future.

The international strategy of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona is underpinned in improvement of the quality. This internationalization process is a means to get our goals.

These goals can be resumed with these four key points:

- a quality and multidisciplinary teaching

- an internationally accredited research with local impact
- knowledge transfer to society
- responsible management of the resources

This strategy is focusing the search of international partners taking into account the following geographical areas: Europe, East-Asia (bearing in mind that the UAB is present in that area by its office located in Shanghai), and in the American continent with different targets with North-America and Latin-America. Within these areas the UAB focuses its interest on those higher education institutions with similar characteristics and with a teaching, innovation and excellence investment that results attractive for the exchange of students and academic and research staff.

The UAB is reinforcing as well its international presence by participating in prestigious international networks and consortia that allow, on the one hand, a rewarding cooperation

at the level of teaching and research and, on the other hand, more international visibility and projection.

Promoting the mobility of all the members of the university community is for the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona a key element for the internationalization of the institution. The UAB is giving special priority to the student mobility, either for academic stays or for internships, this last option being an interesting way for students to enter the job market and the business world. The teaching staff mobility involves the knowledge transfer and good practices among the academic staff of the UAB and the opportunity for local students to receive teaching by invited scholars; this kind of activity enriches the local students' learning program, because it supposes a differentiating element for it.

The double and joint degrees represent a strategic investment for the UAB. The participation of the UAB in the Erasmus Mundus Action 1 (with one PhD program and 7 for Master

level) or in the multilateral projects conducted by networks in which the UAB takes part (as for instance the ECIU) or by means of the bilateral agreements with specific institutions, are as well important elements for the benefit of the internationalization of all the university community. For the academic year 2013 we have 19 of these projects, most of them for the master level.

Therefore, the UAB sees in the internationalization an element of participation in a context that becomes more and more globalised and in which the higher education has a specific weight that is more important every day. With the promotion of a more international profile the UAB is reaching a relevant position in the higher education scene at all levels, and this is an aspect to care for its relevance and interest in all the fields of the higher education in Europe.