



**Western Norway
University of
Applied Sciences**

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT 2016 – 2020

ECHE number: 271897-EPP-1-2018-1-NO-EPPKA1-ECHE

Erasmus Code: N BERGEN14

PIC: 916768923

Background

HVL was founded on January 1 2017 by the merger of three former university colleges. The merging institutions are active participants in Erasmus+.

International strategy

HVL has high ambitions regarding internationalization. Through close cooperation with civil society and industry, HVL aims to contribute to regional, national and international knowledge development within its profile areas: health and social sciences, engineering and teacher training. The institution will continue to build strong academic and research environments with an international profile and to develop formal agreements for mobility of students in all 3 cycles. In addition, we will develop flexible arrangements and incentives for staff mobility for teaching and training. The university board has decided upon a framework for an institutional strategy for the new institution.

EU

Cooperation with European countries is a priority for HVL. We work towards more student mobility with European partners and particularly within Erasmus+ and more academic and research cooperation between HVL and European partners. HVL aims to increase the share of external funding of education and research projects, particularly through increased participation in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+. Over the past years' measures have been taken to build administrative competence and capacity to advise and assist the researchers in developing good projects and applications for funding. Special funds are also made available for development of strategic partnerships and joint applications.

Non-EU

Outside the EU, HVL focuses on cooperation with the BRICS countries and North America. The Norwegian Government has established several partnership programmes to encourage research and educational cooperation in these areas. HVL will continue to develop successful projects under these programmes. Cooperation for capacity building in developing countries through educational and research activities is another priority area for HVL. Several of our study programmes offer placements for health science students and for teacher training students in African countries. We intend to take advantage of synergies created from these partnerships and look at opportunities made available within Erasmus+ Key Action 2.

Partnerships

All partnerships are grounded in one or more particular academic department(s) or faculty. Agreements are initiated by faculty through academic or research cooperation activities. When choosing to establish new partnerships we primarily focus on academic networks and R&D cooperation although students' preferences are also considered. Agreements are signed on institutional level and are registered in a national database. HVL aims to enter into strategically important partnerships for the development of the institution both in relation to the quality of our study programmes and our research. We also aim to include enterprises/ industry in our collaboration for R&D purposes as well as to offer placement opportunities for our students.

Overall HVL's geographical priority areas are in line with Norwegian national policy that focuses on the BRICS countries, Japan, Europe (particularly the Nordic Countries, France and Germany) and North America.

Mobility

HVL aims at providing mobility opportunities for students in all study programmes and in all 3 cycles. Mobility for students in Master and Ph.D. level is a particular priority as our portfolio on 2nd and 3rd cycle programmes is increasing. The IO staff work closely with the programme coordinators to target the best partners with the most relevant exchange opportunities. Special seed funding schemes are set up to provide the programme coordinators with opportunities to visit potential partners. IO staff partakes in these visits and participates in meetings with potential partners to provide knowledge and guidance in the process and to ensure that practical matters (e.g. housing, visa issues, and admission procedures) are clarified and settled.

Joint programmes

HVL has ambitions to offer joint courses/ programmes with designated partner institutions within areas of particular international relevance. We have several joint programmes with other Norwegian universities and from 2017 we offer a joint master in Maritime Operations (120 ECTS) with University of Applied Sciences Emden/Leer in Germany. We are also in the process of developing a dual master in Early Childhood Education with Beijing Normal University and East China Normal University. In addition, we are currently applying for Erasmus+ funding to develop a joint Master Programme in Global Health and Rehabilitation through the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Programme.

Erasmus+

Participation in Erasmus+ is of high priority for HVL and the Norwegian government supports this agenda through financial incentives for mobility and participation in cooperation projects. HVL has an institutional coordinator for Erasmus+, an advisor for activities in KA2 and coordinators responsible for Erasmus+ student and staff mobility. We have specific information on our website for students and staff about mobility opportunities within Erasmus+ and we organize information meetings especially on Erasmus+.

KA 1: Mobility

Student and staff mobility with programme countries

To achieve outbound Erasmus+ student mobility we take special measures to inspire students to choose a semester in Europe. Erasmus+ student ambassadors, Erasmus+ student café, and information meetings are examples of targeted activities. We intend to initiate a project on Erasmus+ traineeship/ placements for BSc. Engineering students.

HVL aims for a better balance in the number of in- and outbound students within Erasmus+. A majority of our incoming students comes through the Erasmus+ programme. To increase our numbers even more we will evaluate our course catalogue annually to make it relevant and attractive for international students. One measure will be to develop course packages to make it easier for the students to choose courses for one complete semester (30 ECTS). HVL offers a special Buddy programme for international students where Norwegian and international students participate in joint activities. Through various social and academic activities, we aim to strengthen the integration of international students. We have student assistants on the different campuses who are responsible for such activities and we will continue to improve this.

Staff mobility within Erasmus+ is a means to increase student mobility with our Erasmus+ partners. We aim to increase the number of staff mobility for both teaching and training. To achieve this we will revise our Erasmus+ procedures in order to make it easier for staff to apply for mobility grants. HVL allocates extra funding for Erasmus+ staff mobility when necessary. We encourage incoming staff mobility for guest lecturing and the IO organizes an annual staff mobility week, together with targeted faculty.

Student and staff mobility with partner countries

Norwegian students have very good funding opportunities for exchange studies and HVL has high numbers of outbound student mobility to partner countries under other programmes than Erasmus+. We therefore aim to increase the number of incoming students from partner countries, as well as staff mobility particularly through Erasmus+. We have and intend to submit for mobility with targeted partners in e.g. Brazil, Canada, China and USA.

KA 2 Cooperation

HVL aims to increase the share of external funding of education and research projects in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+. We aim to build administrative competence and capacity to advise and assist staff in developing good projects and applications for funding. We have designated a position at the IO for support with KA2 projects proposals. This will be further developed and special funds will be made available for development of strategic partnerships and joint applications. We aim at obtaining synergies between engagement in Erasmus+ and other cooperation programmes provided by the Norwegian government.

Goals towards EU's modernisation agenda

HVL's four development goals are:

1. to contribute to sustainable development of *the West Coast* region through education, research, innovation and collaboration
2. to increase the number of research groups in order to support the ambition of being accredited as a full university
3. to prioritize international cooperation for research and innovation and to increase internationalization of education at home and abroad and
4. to be attractive for prospective students, be close to enrolled students and to have a reputation for high quality education. Participation in the Erasmus+ programme is a tool to reach all these goals.

HVL aims at reaching 70 % attainment for admitted students to our programmes. We have identified several measures in connection with this e.g. towards targeting specific groups such as immigrants and

female/ male students in particular study programmes. We believe that offering exchange opportunities can contribute to recruiting and to attaining students.

Improving quality and relevance is a constant priority for HVL. Our study programmes are required to deliver research-based education and this is implemented in all three cycles. We reward high quality education with an annual award for outstanding teaching where research-based education and innovation are key criteria. Students are involved in research-based education from the bachelor level through to Ph.D.

Digitalization of teaching and learning is high on the agenda. We have introduced digital examinations and our classrooms are equipped with the latest technology. HVL has the most advanced simulation facilities in Norway where e.g. nursing students can train before doing placement in surgical wards. We aim for more international cooperation that utilize our facilities and cooperation on developing this area further.

As a higher education institution offering study programmes within health sciences, social sciences, engineering and teacher training, we depend on close connections and cooperation with the labour market. Most of our study programmes include mandatory placements in local industry/ organizations. The management is responsible for the Council for Cooperation with the Labour Market. Experts from local industry/ society are engaged to teach the students and many students are expected to conduct a project in cooperation with local industry as part of their BSc/ MSc. thesis. HVL conducts a biannual "Candidate Survey" where we ask employers to report on the quality and relevance of our candidates' qualifications. Through the Erasmus+ programme, we aim to engage in more cooperation with European enterprises/ industry in relation to traineeships and we intend to develop joint projects connecting universities and industry/ society.

We aim to increase the number of students completing a period of study or training abroad to 20 % by 2020. All our study programmes have mobility opportunities within the curricula and exchange agreements with international partners with relevant study programmes/ courses for their students. All students shall receive a preapproval for courses that are automatically approved as counting towards their degree upon return to HVL. All students shall receive a Diploma Supplement at graduation and we are using the European Qualifications Framework to define the learning outcomes for all courses. We are in the process of applying this to the mobility outcomes as well. HVL sees international students as an asset and we aim to increase the number of international students in our study programmes. HVL would like to increase the number of outgoing students as well and we would like to see that more of these students choose to study abroad through Erasmus+. We would also like to see more incoming students from the Erasmus+ programme and partner countries. Using the staff mobility programme as a recruitment arena is one of the measures we will be taking into account and we will be looking for synergies with other cooperation programmes involving partner countries.

In accordance with Norwegian national policy, HVL aims at linking education, research and innovation in all fields of activity and in all our study programmes. We encourage inter- and multidisciplinary cooperation for innovation and we aim to have our students involved in research conducted by our staff. We intend for more students to be involved in higher education cooperation projects through Erasmus+.

To improve governance we constantly work to develop our internal procedures. We aim for an increase in externally funded projects/ activities and our intention is that every unit should be involved in an EU project. To encourage applications for external funding we launch seed funding schemes for both research and educational cooperation and we have built administrative capacity and competence to support project development.