Erasmus Policy Statement

City University London (CUL) is proud of its success in attracting the most able international students and staff, and we recognise the role that internationalisation plays in enhancing excellence in research, education, student experience and graduate employability. City’s targets for internationalisation are guided by the University Strategic Plan 2012-2016. At the heart of the international activities lies the enhancement of City’s international reputation by creating a vibrant international community of students and staff, increasing student and staff mobility, creating high quality partnerships and collaborations world-wide that make positive contributions to education and research, enhancing the learning experience of our students through transnational education and improving the global visibility of our University.

The institutional strategy emphasizes the importance of mobility for students, academic and professional staff. Mobility partnerships are either initiated by an academic department in the case of discipline specific relationships, or by the International Office with regard to multi-discipline or university-wide agreements. Partners are chosen in some cases for a particular subject area and in other cases for their breadth of subjects. Partnerships are formed in cities, regions or countries where there is demonstrable demand from our students and staff to go. In all cases, partnerships are developed with institutions abroad which have a high degree of academic and research synergy and compatibility with City’s programmes and activities. Additionally, CUL looks at the international reputation of the partner institution, as well as other considerations such as: the level of support provided to students, accommodation options, safety and security issues, and the level and types of extra curricula activities available to students. This later point is an important consideration as it is connected to the employability agenda of our students.

Recognizing that partnership is a two-way process, when establishing a new agreement or evaluating an existing relationship, CUL also considers ways for enhancing the partner university, such as assisting in the modernization or Europeanization of its education and research. City always views a mobility agreement as the first stage in a potential wider academic and research engagement with the partner university over a longer term basis.

City’s International Office (IO) has developed a clear process for establishing new partnerships. Agreements are initiated mainly by an academic department but also by the IO. The initiating staff submit an Agreement Proposal form to outline the nature of the relationship, to explain how it fits into the departmental or institutional strategic priorities and to provide details about the partner. Due diligence and service quality checks are then undertaken, with the department responsible ensuring that research and/or curricula matching is completed. All relationships are evaluated on an annual basis. Evaluations are based on the academic and student support experiences of the participants, the quality of the learning outcomes and the potential for continued collaboration between the two universities.

In regards to the geographic focus for the mobility partnerships, this is driven by both departmental and institutional considerations, with student demand also taken into account. Western Europe continues to remain a core region for CUL. Additionally, the English speaking world (USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore) represents a major attraction for many students although there is recently increasing demand for exchanges with Japan, Korea, Latin America and Central Europe.

1st cycle, 3rd cycle and staff mobility take priority for City’s mobility schemes. In part this is due to the fact that the one-year masters programmes limit opportunities for mobility. Reflecting on the key employability gains to be achieved through a period of work or study abroad, as part of the
Strategic Plan, the University is setting itself a target of 10% of our undergraduate students to have an international experience by the time they graduate. Therefore, 1st cycle students are a key target group for mobility programmes. In addition, the University recognizes the benefits of mobility to the career development of early career researchers and new academic staff; this is further reflected in the University’s adherence to the UK Concordat on Research Career Development and the EU Charter for Researchers.

The decision to engage in degree programmes with other HEIs is made by the Department through their School/Faculty Board of Studies. At present the number of dual award degrees is two at the Masters (2nd Cycle) level and there are no examples of international joint degree awards, although a number are under consideration. The University is aiming to increase the number of Joint and dual degree programmes in the coming years through annual targets agreed with Schools/Faculties.

CUL considers international collaboration projects as the main approach for enhancing bilateral and multilateral partnerships, enhancing human resources and institutional capacity within the partnership, sharing good practice and developing long lasting activities in education and research. The University engages in international collaboration projects where the project is in phase with the overall strategy of the University and where substantial benefits to research and/or education at CUL can be demonstrated. Participation in EU and international cooperation projects has been for years an important part of City’s vision, even if it involves a relatively small fraction of staff members. At present CUL is successfully leading two and is involved in seven LLP projects and three TEMPUS projects.

City recognises the importance of research and innovation to meet Europe 2020 goals of a knowledge economy and targets on youth employment. We have a dedicated team responsible for outreach and widening participation activities, with mobility grants available for all eligible students. http://www.city.ac.uk/about/city-the-community-and-environment/city-and-the-community/widening-participation

The University is embarking on a strategy for improving further the employability prospects of City’s graduates. This involves a wide review of teaching methodologies, curriculum and expected learning outcomes to ensure relevance in the constantly changing employment market. City is committed to internationalisation, which includes in addition to mobility the internationalisation of the curriculum and transnational education. Mobility is greatly embedded in the employability agenda with special career advice offered to international students returning back home through the Careers Office. Alumni working abroad are proving to be a valuable source of advice for our international students acting as their mentors. The university is also developing work-based learning options and explores existing international partnerships for facilitating placement abroad of its students.

City plays a significant role in the economic development of London as an international hub for knowledge, expertise and innovation. With the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP), City aims to create an innovative environment for talented young people. City engages in teaching, research and knowledge transfer across a range of disciplines through its academic staff supported by a range of professional services. Through knowledge transfer, our academics participate in on-going and rewarding collaborations with innovative businesses, develop better understanding of business requirements and operations, apply knowledge and expertise to important problems and develop educational and research material for use in lectures and research projects.
At City we provide mobility opportunities to all students for either study abroad, engage in research, or work. We are working towards introducing mobility within the various curricula and creating mobility windows for all UG degrees. We also encourage staff to interact on both research and teaching with academics from other HEIs both in the UK and abroad as means of joint publications and research proposals but also for preparing the way for future institutional partnerships.

City is committed to developing centres of excellence and is undertaking structural reforms to streamline governance and administration and remove barriers to innovation and progress. In an era of austerity and decreasing public funding, City looks to diversify funding streams through a variety of means: by developing a suite of new innovative international dual and joint degree programmes across a range of disciplines, by increasing the international students numbers; by further engagement in externally funded international projects including both small and medium size enterprises and multinational organisations. City also aims to enhance research and commercial income streams through various enterprise activities including the transfer of knowledge through provision of CPD courses for the community, government, industry and private/public organisations.