

Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS) 2021-2027 of SRH University Heidelberg, last amended on 20 May 2020

Erasmus Policy Statement of SRH University Heidelberg, Erasmus Code D HEIDELB05

Strategy, objectives and priorities of SRH University Heidelberg for its Erasmus activities 2021–2027.

Internationalisation is an integral part of the general objectives of SRH University Heidelberg and a key element in the university's mission statement. In this context, European and non-European activities play a more or less equal role.

SRH University Heidelberg has set itself the goal of sustainably optimising the teaching and learning conditions at its university in an exemplary manner. As early as 2011, SRH University Heidelberg converted all its degree programmes to the CORE Principle (CORE = Competence-Oriented Research and Education) – a study model that focuses on active and autonomous learning. In this context, the precise formulation of learning objectives is crucial for the design of degree programmes, modules and courses. To this end, key components such as the concept of competence, constructive alignment and various types of teaching and assessment are presented. Within the CORE Principle, all degree programmes were switched to 5-week blocks, each of which concludes with a competence-oriented examination. **A new take on studying:** SRH University Heidelberg has revolutionised teaching; its CORE Principle represents a teaching and learning model that is unique in Germany. CORE stands for a completely new study structure where students acquire competences based on the requirements of the labour market, being coached by their lecturers in the process. For this approach, Stifterverband and the Volkswagen Foundation presented SRH University Heidelberg with the Genius Loci Award 2018.

SRH University Heidelberg is a private university with a student population of around 3,500, roughly 20% of whom are international students (as of 2019). The university offers a wide range of programmes in six schools (Business; Engineering and Architecture; Social Sciences and Law; Information, Media and Design; Applied Psychology; and Therapeutic Sciences). Each year, some 100 students and around 40 teaching or administrative staff go abroad to Europe or further afield. SRH University Heidelberg currently has direct contacts with a total of around 65 European and 40 non-European partner universities.

SRH University Heidelberg is a private university that emerged from the field of vocational rehabilitation. Hence, the notion of equality already has a 40-year tradition at our university. Equality and inclusion are a living reality at SRH University Heidelberg. This is also ensured by elected representatives for inclusion, compliance, diversity and for persons with severe disabilities or minor impairments. The entire SRH University Heidelberg campus is also accessible for the disabled; all areas and schools are wheelchair-accessible and there is suitable accommodation available for students with disabilities. SRH University Heidelberg has a diversity and equality concept that ensures equal opportunities and family-friendliness for a future-oriented university. SRH University Heidelberg welcomes all employees and students – regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, mental and physical abilities, or ethnic, religious and social background – who meet the professional requirements placed on them, who treat their fellow human beings with tolerance and respect, and who respect and follow the values of this policy in their work. SRH University Heidelberg also pays attention to its party-political, religious and ideological neutrality and to our independence from the economic interests of third parties, in order to maintain a climate in which staff and students can freely develop, support and realise their own ideas and opinions. The SRH Group committed itself to observing these factors by signing the Diversity Charter as early as 2008.

SRH University Heidelberg is convinced that, by taking into account diverse perspectives, better results are achieved in problem solving and in research and development, leading in the long run to

an even better public perception. Especially in times of internationalisation and demographic change, creating an awareness of this factor is an important element in the bid to do justice to future social and economic trends and to survive in the market as an attractive university and employer. As a first step, the role of the Equal Opportunities Officer was expanded to include the issue of diversity in July 2018. As part of this process, the Equal Opportunities Concept from 2015 was fundamentally revised.

The goals to be achieved in the process of the internationalisation of SRH University Heidelberg during the period of the Erasmus Programme 2021-27 are:

1. To digitalise processes in the Erasmus programme by using the Erasmus Dashboard and developing the university's internal Campus Net for the following purposes:
 - a. Introduction of the OLA (Online Learning Agreement) from 2021 (a "trial run" was conducted in 2020) with the aim of ensuring the automatic mutual recognition of qualifications obtained and learning periods completed abroad
 - b. Preparation of digital online institutional agreements from 2021 onwards (started already in 2020)
 - c. Introduction of a European Student ID Card
2. To increase the proportion of students who spend a semester or internship abroad as part of their studies to at least 40% of all students at the university by taking the following measures:
 - a. Transformation of existing Erasmus agreements with individual schools into university-wide agreements, where possible, to facilitate exchange opportunities for all schools, possibly also across schools, where expedient.
 - b. Mandatory periods abroad on certain degree programmes.
 - c. Further development of university partnerships in the USA, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Canada
 - d. Development of an internal internship exchange with contacts to international companies and institutions that take on trainees from our university each year.
 - e. Support for students wishing to complete practical projects or their final theses abroad
3. To increase the proportion of degree-seeking students to 30% (currently around 20%) of the university's total student population and improve quality by:
 - a. Undertaking targeted recruitment abroad, especially in the Balkan region, Turkey, South America, Russia, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand by visiting international university fairs and recruiting via international university agents.
 - b. Developing degree programmes taught in English, especially at the Bachelor's level.
 - c. Offering English-language networking and coaching seminars alongside studies (also in cooperation with Heidelberg University's Welcome Centre) to help graduates apply for jobs with local companies.
4. To expand the range of courses taught in English by
 - a. Creating new innovative English-language degree programmes, especially in the field of environmental technology.
 - b. Establishing new double degree programmes.
 - c. Ensuring greater involvement of international visiting lecturers and suitable corporate personnel to teach for a short period or even for an entire 5-week block if possible.
 - d. Offering English-language summer school programmes with partner universities from Europe and across the world.
5. To advance institutional framework conditions such as bilingualism in the schools and in the administration by:
 - a. Ensuring the targeted implementation of stays abroad, including language courses, for administrative staff
 - b. Offering weekly in-house training sessions

6. To expand established and new university partnerships, also with less developed countries such as Ukraine, Belarus and Bhutan, to bring a diversity of students and staff from a wide range of countries to our campus:
 - a. Annual applications under Erasmus KA107 for the continuation of regular student, lecturer and staff exchange
 - b. Joint conferences and research projects
 - c. Joint summer schools, held alternately at the partner universities and at SRH University Heidelberg.
7. To promote “internationalisation at home” by accepting incoming students of all kinds, helping non-mobile German students to gain intercultural experience. To this end, the following events are held on a regular basis, which can be attended by both German and international students:
 - a. A weekly International Cultural Club with a variety of topics on German culture and the cultures of international students.
 - b. An annual “International Week” involving around 25 international visiting lecturers, some of whom bring their students with them.
 - c. Joint trips and events.
 - d. Half-yearly “Study abroad fairs” where international students present their country, culture and culinary specialities.
8. To facilitate mobility abroad both to SRH University Heidelberg and from SRH University Heidelberg to other countries, with special consideration for underrepresented or disadvantaged groups by:
 - a. Announcing that study abroad is expressly facilitated and encouraged for these groups.
 - b. Arranging targeted financial support for these groups (especially within the framework of Erasmus).
 - c. Providing unbureaucratic assistance for solving problems when abroad.