

# ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

# INSTITUTIONAL PHILOSOPHY & VALUES

## Our vision

As a leading University of Applied Sciences IMC Krems is internationally in demand and internationally recognized due to the quality of its graduates and its impact-focus research.

## Our mission

We are an Austrian university with a strong international focus. We actively engage with questions concerning the future of society and business and take new paths in the process of implementation. We develop and implement innovative, sustainable solutions and educational offerings that generate local, national and global benefits.

We constantly develop, and contribute jointly to continuous improvement in the quality of our teaching and research.

## Our values

We are a learning team. Our leading priorities are fairness, commitment, taking responsibility, open-mindedness, diversity and being stakeholder-orientated.

## International Focus

An international focus, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, stakeholder orientation and innovativeness represent core values that are firmly embedded in IMC UAS Krems' institutional philosophy. These key principles and orientations have provided sound guidance for "higher educational thinking and acting" in all organisational activities ever since the IMC UAS Krems was founded in 1994.

Thus, an intrinsically international focus has formed the basis of all activities and is also reflected in the IMC UAS Krems' strategy and operational targets. IMC UAS Krems pursues diverse international accreditation paths and regularly passes strict quality audits. Faculty teaching and researching at IMC UAS Krems are well-integrated expert members of international educational and scientific communities. IMC UAS Krems cooperates with hundreds of universities, research institutions and industry partners on every continent. Innovativeness and excellence are key parameters and driving motivation factors in all partnerships without geographical and intellectual borders.

## Education & Research

With the implementation of a new area of competence in "Digitalisation and Engineering", the three traditional competence areas (business, health and life sciences) of the IMC UAS Krems were extended to a fourth one that supports the solid and future-oriented foundation even further.

Establishing a continuously growing and diverse, international network for teaching, research and co-operation (quantitatively and qualitatively) is an essential prerequisite for IMC UAS Krems' organic development and global positioning as a pro-active and recognised European partner institution.

Innovative didactical approaches and sustainable educational programmes and curricula have been implemented to ensure that local, national and global benefits for manifold stakeholders in higher education and societies at large are being generated.

# INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY & CORE ACTIONS

Derived from IMC UAS Krems' strategic concept and guidelines, further attention shall be drawn to the objectives, tools and concrete actions of internationalisation. IMC UAS Krems' continuous participation in the Erasmus+ programme fosters inclusive mobilities and forms an essential pillar for the consistent pursuit of international education projects. Without such funding persistent and large-scale mobility activities could hardly be implemented successfully.

## Structural Organisational Support

Individual mobilities for learners and staff ("Key Action 1") and innovative international cooperation projects ("Key Action 2") are processed by the departments of "International Relations (IR)" & "Research Services".

The "International Welcome Centre" (a sub-unit of IR) functions as an operational "one-stop-shop" for all international students, teachers, researchers and staff providing valuable information, advice and personal support along the whole service-chain (initial application, visa, housing, social integration in the campus and host communities, German language courses, etc.) at the IMC UAS Krems.

Intercultural Competence Trainings are also offered for international and incoming students as well as IMC UAS Krems outgoing nominees to prepare them for their diverse and challenging experiences in Austria or abroad.

## Partner network

Teachers and researchers of the IMC UAS Krems are valued and esteemed members of the international academic & scientific communities. Therefore, cooperation with higher education and research institutions as well as industry partners and (public)sector organisations have been established across all continents. However, it remains an essential objective to further extend the international partner network for all disciplines and study programmes of the IMC UAS Krems in and beyond Europe.

The active and lively utilisation of reliable international networks serves as an effective and efficient pillar to ensure the utmost quality for a diverse range of projects.

## Mobility

The IMC UAS Krems aims to enhance and institutionalise strategic higher education mobility activities to establish and sustain long-term-, competence- and excellence-oriented mobilities with partner universities.

Student- and (teaching-) staff mobilities through both outgoing and incoming flows, promote knowledge transfer and new competences in learning approaches as well as teaching and training methods. At the same time, global awareness and respect for diversity, the deepening of language skills and job-oriented experiences are conveyed and achieved. Whilst participating in Erasmus+ activities, students and (teaching-) staff enhance self-esteem, gain intercultural sensitivity and obtain self-reflection abilities that have a significant and positive impact on their personal development.

In the near and medium-term a growing focus will also be laid on international credit mobility (KA 171) to strengthen international higher education partnerships, foster incoming mobilities (as part of IMC UAS Krems' "Internationalisation @ Home" strategy) and to expand mobility opportunities for students and staff not only within Europe but worldwide.

## Double Degree and Transnational Programmes

IMC UAS Krems aims to develop more “Double Degree” tracks with long-standing and experienced partner universities to increase the number of international study options in diverse yet complementary academic environments.

Furthermore, “Transnational Programmes” which significantly contribute to expand IMC UAS Krems study programmes, will be further developed to encourage mobilities for both teaching staff and students. Participating in the international mobility programme of Erasmus+ KA 171 will be an essential element to increase the quality and quantity of mobilities in IMC’s transnational and double degree programmes.

## Internationalisation @ Home

Internationalisation @ Home is another key priority. By offering approximately half of its study programmes entirely in English, implementing specific courses in English in German-taught programmes, integrating international and intercultural elements in all curricula and fostering Cooperative Online International Learning (COIL) opportunities between IMC UAS Krems and partner universities as well as gradually developing an attractive offer of short-term/ blended mobilities, IMC UAS Krems aims to establish and sustain qualitative international and intercultural learning settings for all students and faculty members. The primary aspiration is to offer “global immersion” and alternative (digital & blended) mobility for students and staff with no or fewer opportunities to participate in long-term mobilities. The implementation of a regular “International Training Week” in Krems for colleagues from partner universities will foster networking opportunities at home and eventually facilitate the development of joint projects.

## ERASMUS KEY PRIORITIES

The IMC UAS Krems fully endorses and supports the key priorities of the Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 and has implemented strategies, processes and measures to enhance awareness and ensure its realisation.

### Diversity and Inclusion

At the IMC UAS Krems diversity is appreciated as a remarkably enriching resource. Everyone is addressed equally and encouraged to study, teach, research and work without fear of discrimination. Based on these set principles, the “IMC Gender and Diversity Advisory Board” was founded.

To meet special needs and to support disadvantaged colleagues and students with fewer opportunities a union for students with special needs was established providing information, advice and tailor-made support.

To allow everyone to participate in international activities, the IMC UAS Krems intensifies alternative types of mobility as mentioned above. This ensures access to mobility projects for financially disadvantaged or part-time students, students enrolled in study programmes with a less globalised focus, as well as students and staff with family responsibilities.

### Digital Transformation

Derived from the institutional strategy “Targeting the Future”, digital optimisation is also an essential objective in academic mobility procedures. This includes supportive tools for incoming students to plan their schedules, course enrolment, and to digitally establish learning agreements and issue transcripts of records. Erasmus without Paper will be implemented by the IMC UAS Krems to reduce bureaucracy for students and mobility officers to actively participate in shaping the digital European higher education sector.

## Green Erasmus

The IMC UAS Krems is fully aware of its commitment to safeguard societal and environmental responsibilities. Respecting nature as well as utilising and allocating resources in a sustainable way are values and guiding principles that are firmly embedded in the strategy. All stakeholders shall convey these values and examples of “good practices” to IMC UAS Krems students. Sustainable thinking is being integrated as a generic pedagogical principle in all study programmes and has explicitly materialized in the IMC UAS Krems Master Programme “Environmental- and Sustainable Management”. The strategic goal of the IMC UAS Krems includes the efficient use of resources and the enhancement of environmentally friendly mobilities. Incentives for all travellers who opt for sustainable means of transportation are being developed. To reduce the IMC UAS Krems carbon footprint and subsequently preserve essential resources, short project meetings and small-scale project events are preferably conducted online.

## Global engagement and participation

Mobilities allow for students’ diverse and authentic experiences as responsible, proactive “ambassadors” of the IMC UAS Krems (outgoing) and the (incoming) students’ home countries. Disinterested observation and reflection of social, political, economic and cultural differences during periods abroad may enrich students’ views of the world through mutual appreciation for their “own” and the respective “other”. With “Intercultural Competence Workshops” outgoing students are prepared for their active field experiences abroad. Incoming Students on the other hand, are familiarised with “Austria’s and Europe’s businesses, politics and cultures” in two extra-curricular, complementary and inter-active lectures. With the development of the IMC “Global Engagement for Global Citizen Programme” (including a certificate), the IMC will continue to foster and acknowledge student activities reflecting European values and key priorities of the Erasmus+ programme 2021-2017.