Student Mobility

### Definition

Student mobility is any opportunity for students to work or study abroad whilst undertaking their degree programme – whether undergraduate or postgraduate.

Student Mobility can be both incoming and outgoing in the form of **Bilateral Exchange** or one-way **Study Abroad**. The University of Glasgow has Bilateral Exchange Agreements in place for sending its outgoing students to partner institutions in Europe (via Erasmus) and non European countries (International Exchange Programme).

Study Abroad programmes are one-way (incoming only) fee paying programmes for either one semester or one academic year.

Increasing student mobility is a strategic priority for the University over the Strategic Plan period 2010-2015. The University is committed to enhancing our students’ understanding and appreciation of other cultures, languages and learning approaches by providing opportunities for all students to engage with the global citizen agenda and to equip them for international career opportunities. Whilst the benefits of student mobility have been well documented, in an environment of significantly focussed internationalisation, these benefits take on a renewed focus for both the University and the Student.

Student mobility opportunities may be an integral part of an academic programme (e.g. fieldwork, placement) or be something that students choose to do such as a **student exchange programme** (Erasmus and non-EU exchanges) to help enhance the overall student experience through international travel and visits, irrespective of duration. There will also be many other opportunities – through particular interests whether social or extracurricular (e.g. voluntary work with an NGO during the vacation or experience gained on a gap year, etc).

Many of the University’s long standing Study Abroad and/or Exchange agreements were initiated by the partner institution. Currently, the University of Glasgow **International Recruitment Team** is proactively identifying and approaching appropriate partners to sign new agreements.

**Common features**

Study Abroad and student exchange programmes may be described as collaborative as part of the student’s programme is being provided by a partner institution.

Formal student mobility opportunities are relatively straightforward to establish.

**Study Abroad Programme**

The Study Abroad programme is specially designed for incoming visiting students who elect to come to the University of Glasgow for a semester or year as part of their undergraduate degree programme. The University receives tuition fees for each student.

**Student Exchange Programme**

As a registered student of the University of the Glasgow, students have the right to expect that a period of study with an exchange partner is of equivalent level, standard and quality as they could expect if taking that period of study here. A number of safeguards are necessary to ensure the overall quality of the student experience overseas as well as the level and amount of credit.

A student exchange programme offers students the opportunity of spending their second or third year at another University (or equivalent institution) allowing them to broaden their horizons and experience a different academic environment. No tuition fee is paid to the host institution.
Students are able to participate in exchanges (or study or work placements) between 3-10 months (Erasmus exchanges) or one semester or one academic year (International Exchanges), for which they will receive credits that count towards their final degree classification.

Exchange arrangements are divided into incoming and outgoing mobility. Since students are not required to pay tuition fees to the host institution, incoming and outgoing student numbers should match to balance out the financial loss for each School/RI. The exchange numbers are normally previously determined and outlined in an agreement.

**What do you need to do?**

**Study Abroad Programme and Incoming Exchange Students Programme**

Academic subject areas should be open to receiving incoming Study Abroad & Exchange participants into their subjects.

Each Academic subject area should have a nominated contact person who can assess individual student applications and determine whether or not student is eligible to take specific classes in that subject. The application is sent by the Study Abroad Team and the answer is fed back to the team within required turn-around time.

When admitted to specific classes, incoming Study Abroad and Exchange students are expected to undertake the same workload including assessments as full degree-seeking students.

Grade and credit information for Study Abroad and Exchange students is to be returned to Registry at the end of the students’ period of study and a formal University of Glasgow transcript to be sent to the students’ home institution.

**Outgoing Student Exchange Programme**

The University is responsible for ensuring that there are satisfactory arrangements in place, in terms of facilities, health and safety, and insurance to cover and support its students while they are on exchange at other institutions.

The School/RI must nominate a member of staff to take responsibility for the management of the exchange. For an Erasmus exchange there is a detailed role description for the Subject Erasmus Coordinator.

For outgoing exchange students, in terms of the quality assurance of the academic student exchange where academic credit will be awarded for successful completion of the exchange, you should take account of

- The match between the level and quantity of credit deriving from the period of study at the exchange partner
- The fit with the content and learning outcomes of the programme/ course here at the University as defined in the programme/ course specification
- The quality of the student experience, the learning resources and learning environment.
- How grades for assessments will be translated to the University of Glasgow grading structure;
- The arrangements for students failing particular aspects of assessment at the exchange institution and the opportunities to resit
- Any implication for the final award resulting from the exchange
- The arrangements for communication between University academic staff and students on exchange
- Briefing for students on different assessment and study cultures
- Meeting the requirements of professional bodies (where applicable)

Where possible, reciprocity of student numbers should be maintained to minimise any negative financial impact on the University. In a large number of cases due to perceived economic, language and curriculum difficulties on the part of Glasgow students, we have welcomed more exchange
students than the partner institution. As this can have a significant impact on School/RI or College resources, you should consider this carefully before committing to such an arrangement.

**Level of approval**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of arrangement</th>
<th>Level of approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erasmus exchange agreements</td>
<td>Head of College approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Dean for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-EU exchange arrangements</td>
<td>Internationalisation Manager/International Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Abroad &amp; Exchange Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Recruitment Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad (Incoming, fee paying)</td>
<td>International Officer (Americas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Abroad &amp; Exchange Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further information on this is provided on the [Study Abroad & Exchange](#) webpages

**What is needed for approval?**

Firstly, you need to address the [key principles for collaborative arrangements](#). The reputation and standing of the institution will be of particular importance.

**Study Abroad Programme**

Potential Study Abroad partners should be carefully selected.

The successful process employed collaboratively by the International Recruitment and the Study Abroad Teams has usually involved an inward visit or mission by the prospective international partner institution to Glasgow. This usually follows some exploratory and information-providing emails from both sides.

During the inward visit, the International Recruitment and the Study Abroad teams work together to provide a general and more specific (if required) overview of the University of Glasgow, involving:

- academic subject areas.
- discussions surrounding the practicalities of a new programme
- familiarisation tour of campus facilities and resources

Following the inward visit, a follow-up visit to the potential partner institution will take place on-site.

A formal agreement will be finalised at or during these final stages.

When selecting partners with whom to work, the International Recruitment and the Study Abroad Teams will consider the following:

- educational standing of potential partner institution
- size and type of institution (e.g. liberal arts, private, state, college or university)
- the tuition fees charged by the potential partner institution (to estimate the affordability of a programme at Glasgow for their students)
- other collaborative partners/programmes held by the prospective partner institution

**Student Exchange Programme**

In the case of a new exchange partner, detailed consideration needs to be given to the facilities and the quality and level of the provision. Other student support issues would be reviewed such as learning support, library and IT support and accommodation.

Requests to set up a new Erasmus agreement should be made on [proposed new exchange agreement form](#) which should be submitted by the end of December to [European Exchanges](#). This
asks for information on the proposed exchange partner as well as the benefits you envisage your students and the School/RI will acquire from the proposed exchange.

The proposal form is signed by the relevant Student Mobility Coordinator, who is responsible for managing the exchange; the Head of School/Director of Institute and the relevant Head of College. A final review is undertaken by the International Dean who, if content, recommends signature.

In the case of a new International Exchange partner (i.e. non-Erasmus) the following should be borne in mind:

- The prospective partner should meet with the strategic goals of the University of Glasgow. Referral can be made to the Internationalisation Manager in RIO for advice on this. Referral should also be made to the International Dean for the region and the Study Abroad & Exchange Team/ International Recruitment Team;
- The Study Abroad & Exchange Team will give due consideration to areas such as the quality and level of support and provision at the prospective partner institution, facilities and other support services such as library, disability services, accommodation and IT support.

**Type of Agreement**

Separate model agreements have been established for study abroad, Erasmus and non-EU exchange arrangements. Agreements are normally signed by the Principal in line with the signatory of the partner institution.

The Erasmus exchange agreement is in a standard format across Europe. This is signed by the University's Institutional Coordinator, Mrs Colette McGowan. You can find a copy of an Erasmus exchange agreement [here](#).

There is a standard Study Abroad (incoming) Agreement template which can be used and sent to most potential partners, although some prefer to use their own versions.

There is also a standard template for International Exchange Agreements, although similarly, many institutions prefer to use their own version.

Copies of signed study abroad and exchange agreements are retained by RIO. RIO will send out contracts and notify the appropriate European authorities.

**Implementation**

The implementation of this type of collaboration should be relatively straight-forward and will be the responsibility of the by the relevant Student Mobility Coordinator in conjunction with the Study Abroad & Exchange Team/ International Recruitment Team.

**Monitoring and Review**

In the case of exchange arrangements, as well as keeping a watching brief on the provision and facilities at the partner institution, feedback should be obtained from returning students and be used to make a judgement on whether or not an arrangement should continue.

RIO staff regularly review all partner institutions. RIO, in liaison with the International Dean for Europe, review existing Erasmus exchanges annually, and where there has been a continuous imbalance of numbers, will likely recommend that the agreement be terminated.

The monitoring of financial arrangements is also vital to determine performance against the business plan and ensure that the partnership remains viable and cost-effective.

RIO is responsible for processing the renewal of study abroad and exchange agreements. We have a number of long-standing study abroad and exchange agreements with non European institutions. The Study Abroad and Exchange staff in RIO will negotiate renewal at the appropriate time, and, after notifying the relevant International Officer and relevant International Dean, arrange signature.

Recent agreements have been established, in the main, with suitable Universitas 21 Exchange institutions, or where there has been a high demand for places where no agreement currently exists.
Issues to be considered

It is important to be aware of some factors limiting to student mobility, which include the following:

- Additional costs of living overseas and lack of financial support from the University or external sources;
- Foreign language skills;
- Disruption associated with relocation;
- Credit transfer and recognition within ‘home’ university degree programme;
- Reluctance to leave their ‘comfort zone’ – particularly given the number of University of Glasgow students living at home (parental home);
- Academic staff reluctant to let their best students participate and potential negative impact on marks
- Insufficient planning period – to plan the period abroad;
- Joint honours students requiring approvals from two Schools;
- Possible difficulties arising from need to obtain approval from professional body for students whose degrees have a professional accreditation.

All of the above limiting factors are valid and should be considered when implementing a solution so that students are presented with realistic opportunities.

One of the key consideration points related to student exchange arrangements is reciprocity of student numbers.

Key Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/RI</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>University Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of School/Director of RI Head of School/RI Administration</td>
<td>International Lead Relevant functional Dean (Graduate Studies, Learning and Teaching) College Mobility Coordinators College Head of Finance</td>
<td>Study Abroad/Exchange team based in Marketing, Recruitment and International Office International Dean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples

The University has a wide range of study abroad and exchange arrangements

A list of current study abroad and exchange arrangements can be found [here](#).