

Radboud University Erasmus Policy Statement

Radboud University is a Dutch comprehensive, internationally-oriented university that aspires to be one of the best in Europe. Radboud University's intellectual environment inspires and challenges our students and staff so that they can extend the scope of academic disciplines and benefit society.

Radboud University operates in an international context by its very nature, since knowledge does not know any borders. We draw our inspiration from academic curiosity and the responsibilities placed upon the university by society. Increasingly, society faces challenges with a global dimension. In order to prepare our students for these challenges and their future role in society we consider international experience and the specific skills that come with it, of utmost importance. Therefore we stimulate our students to go on exchange to one of our esteemed partner universities, to do an international internship, to participate in an international classroom, as well as in online courses and projects organised in cooperation with or by our partners.

By doing so, we aim to cultivate a feeling of European/global citizenship within our students, which contributes to the cultural understanding between youth as well as a better preparation for the demand of the job market. We strive to offer a large variety of excellent (joint) study programmes to equip our students with the necessary skills to enhance their employability at the growingly internationalised labour market, both within academia and outside.

The main objective of our internationalisation strategy is to contribute to the quality of research, education and societal impact. In our vision, internationalisation is a prerequisite for excellent and diversified research and education, in other words: internationalisation is a quality strategy.

Radboud University's international policy is laid down in: Radboud International 2025: Quality First! and is part of Radboud University's strategic plan, titled: A Significant Impact. It is based on the following principles: quality, interdisciplinarity, sustainability and (global) societal needs. This means that, for example, when Radboud University chooses its partners, we do so very carefully - aiming at long lasting quality relationships. We actively build on sustainable international networks of HEI's in Europe and outside Europe, for example through our active membership in "The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities", which is dedicated to enhancing the voice of academic institutions, their researchers and their students.

Our institutional strategy states that "we regard the international and intercultural context as indispensable for the quality of our teaching." Our goal is for all our graduates "to have a significant international learning experience as part of their studies, in order to broaden both academic and personal perspectives" by 2025. This learning experience can be acquired at Radboud University or abroad. Hence Radboud education has two characteristics to achieve this: the international classroom, and study abroad opportunities for all, supported by the possibilities afforded by new technologies and by the opportunities offered through, for instance, the Erasmus+ programme. Of course, Radboud University also supports our staff (non-academic and academic, including PhD) to learn from their peers abroad through staff training and job shadowing in order to improve our research and education. The central International Office promotes these opportunities for staff and students throughout the university multiple times a year. We have dedicated teams working in the faculty's international offices ensuring all students who go abroad have the proper support when choosing their modules abroad, and getting these recognised by the exam boards.

For incoming exchange students, we offer an extensive course catalogue where credits, content and workload are clearly stated to enable the students to pick the right courses and ensure credit recognition by their home university. Connecting sustainability and sustainable challenges with education will stimulate a sustainable way of life and result in positive action. Therefore all faculties offer various courses on sustainability that exchange students can choose while studying here at Radboud.

All our outgoing students can make use of the Online Linguistic Support (OLS) offered through the Erasmus programme to ensure their languages skills are further developed; this can be either English language skills, e.g. to attend courses abroad, or to start learning the language of their host country (provided the language is included in the OLS). Furthermore, we offer free Social Dutch language courses to all our incoming students to nurture civic engagement and active citizenship while residing in our community.

The Erasmus programme/contributes to our international classrooms, as over 700 international Erasmus students visit our campus each academic year. We attach great importance to diversity among both students and staff, so being able for students to attend lectures with peers from all kinds of different backgrounds and nationalities is a great asset. This also applies to staff members: faculty from partner universities contribute to the international classrooms, challenging Radboud colleagues to go abroad themselves to enhance their intercultural and academic skills.

We actively encourage all students and staff members from any background to participate in an exchange program, including students from a disadvantaged background. We will ensure that all who wish to participate in the Erasmus programme receive equal treatment and have the same chances to engage with the programme. We have a transparent, non-discriminatory selection process which is communicated clearly to interested students. We offer additional financial support for students from lower income families and/or with disabilities through our own funds, programmes and schemes, as well as the Erasmus+ top-up (currently in pilot phase). When students with a disability wish to go abroad, we pay extra attention in finding a partner university who can provide them with the support they need to make their exchange successful.

The vision contained in the European Education Area (EEA) policy is closely related to our own goals and vision. We underwrite the vision expressed within the EEA policy, which state that: across the EU spending time abroad to study and learn should become the norm; school and higher education qualifications should be recognised across the EU; knowing two languages in addition to one's mother tongue should be standard; everyone should be able to access high-quality education, irrespective of their socio-economic background, and people should have a strong sense of their identity as a European, of Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity.

As we support the EU's striving to build close connections with the rest of the world, Radboud University has always actively stimulated mobility with countries outside the EU as well. Science has no borders and exchange of knowledge as well as students and staff can't and shouldn't be limited to exchange within the EU. Traditionally Radboud University therefore fosters its good connections with higher education and research institutes all over the world, e.g. in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Indonesia, Israel, Russia, South-Africa, Tanzania, UK, USA and a large number of other countries all over the world. The Erasmus means for this goal we strategically deploy to foster exchange which will lead to demonstrable impact on existing cooperation and research interests. Moreover, we use these funds to explore the possibility to include non-EU partners in our European University of Brain and Technology (NeurotechEU).

The Erasmus programme further motivates us to keep modernising our procedures. Radboud University takes a proactive role in the consultation with the Digital Officer of the National Agency, (Dutch and international) partner institutions and OSIRIS, our Student Information System (SIS). We are very much in favour of a short feedback loop and work according to the agile principle. We are following the development of the functionality by the EUF and EC closely.

Radboud University is convinced that long lasting cooperation (e.g. within the framework of KA2 projects) leads to mutual trust and strong relations. This lays a solid basis for excellent joint research and educational cooperation. Exchange (real or virtual) of students and (young) researchers (incl. PhDs) contributes to the extension of worldwide academic networks.

Radboud University's KA2 projects mainly focus on cooperation in specific fields in which both Radboud and its carefully selected partners excel. As such, these projects, which offer students and staff the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences, have led to important scientific breakthroughs on various occasions.

A KA2 initiative that we are very enthusiastic about, is the funding of European Universities. Radboud University is convinced of the added value of a European University. Last year we have built a trans-European excellence network in the field of brain and technology (NeurotechEU). NeurotechEU will provide brain-centred and/or brain-inspired solutions that could benefit our society and kindle a new economy in Europe. It brings eight leading universities together and 250+ partners from all regions of Europe. NeurotechEU will educate students across all levels to increase the competitiveness of European (NeurotechEU) education, research, economy and society, it will train the next-generation multidisciplinary scientists, scholars and graduates in this field, provide them direct access to cutting-edge infrastructure for fundamental, translational and applied research to help Europe address this unmet challenge. In line with EU policy we look further ahead aiming at expansion outside Europe; the Erasmus funds for 'international mobility' are a useful tool to support this strategy.