



## Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy) 2014-2020

### Seinäjäki University of Applied Sciences (UAS)

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#### ***International (EU and non-EU) strategy of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (UAS).***

Seinäjäki University of Applied Sciences (UAS) is a multidisciplinary institution of HE with 4 500 students, established in 1992. The learning process and the research, development and innovation (RDI) process are the core processes. They are backed by the process of strategic management and leadership and by the support process. Internationality is integrated into all these processes. The mission of Seinäjoki UAS is to advance well-being in the region of South Ostrobothnia by high standard multi-disciplinary education in applied sciences and by RDI. The vision is to be a successful, international institution of HE with an entrepreneurial spirit. The values of Seinäjoki UAS are professional know-how, international networking, active partnership and entrepreneurial spirit.

The International Strategy of Seinäjoki UAS is based on the Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009-2015, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOE). Other documents that have affected the strategic lines include The EAC Green Paper Mobility (The European Commission 2009), aiming to promote the learning mobility of young people up to 20 % of the graduates in the EHEA. The Asia Action Programme (2006) and The Finnish Education Export Strategy (2010) published by the MOE have also affected to the aims of the International Strategy, as well as the Policy Report on Education, Research and Innovation (2010) published by the Finnish Research and Innovation Council. The International Strategy of Seinäjoki UAS is also based on regional policies, The South Ostrobothnia (SO) Regional Plan 2030, SO Higher Education Strategy (2013) and SO Internationalisation Action Plan (2009).

#### The vision of International Strategy 2015 is:

Seinäjäki UAS is a respected operator in the field of international higher education and research, and its international standard education, research and development activities as well as co-operation networks bring significant added value for students, enterprises and other organizations in the region.

#### The strategic aims are:

- 1) internationality is recognized as a strategic success factor and a prerequisite for the successful operation of Seinäjoki UAS,
- 2) the staff is internationally competent and committed and the competence is utilized in teaching, RDI functions and regional development,
- 3) educating internationally competent work force for regional, national, European and international needs,
- 4) teaching conducted in a foreign language and international degree programmes are competitive in the European and global education market,
- 5) investing in creating internationally significant research clusters in co-operation with national, European and global partners,
- 6) Seinäjoki UAS's consolidated operation in the global higher education and research area is utilized in regional development and publicity in such a way that the region is developed into a development path of international competence and co-operation between European countries and Russia as well as the partnership countries in Asia and Latin America.

At Seinäjoki UAS, the partner HEIs have been divided into four categories after careful selection, evaluation and joint discussions with the partners: 0) potential partners, with whom there is currently no active collaboration, but who might become partners e.g. for certain European projects; 1) collaboration focusing on student and teacher mobility between educational units; 2) collaboration of HEIs, which besides mobility includes projects in teaching and training; 3) collaboration of HEIs, with stakeholder representatives from industrial, service and public sectors and with a focus on RDI activity, systematic mobility and development of double/multiple/joint degrees (strategic partners). In addition, Seinäjoki UAS is a member in field-specific mobility-enhancing networks. Most of the partners are European HEIs, but Seinäjoki UAS has key-partners also in the continents of Asia, Africa, North and South America, Australia and in the neighborhood area Russia.

The most important objectives include further development of international services for the mobility target groups (students, staff) and international degree students including double degree students; employing 5-10% of the teaching/research staff from outside Finland, ensuring that all first and second cycle degree programmes include a study or training period abroad and at least one three month module in a foreign language; guaranteeing that all students can achieve a level of international competence; 225 international degree and 225 incoming and outgoing mobility students/trainees yearly and the proportion of international graduates 10%; participating in international networks and partnerships to enable 25-30 international projects annually; offering Finnish and international students in each education field opportunity to obtain a double/multiple/joint degree in strategic partnerships.

***The strategy of Seinäjoki UAS for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme.***

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has set an aim to the Finnish HEIs to double the EU and non-EU international financing for the international projects in teaching, training and research. Also the aim of Seinäjoki UAS is to increase the EU-financing for the projects, especially in the priority fields of education and research. Priority fields are defined in cooperation with the stakeholders in the region based on the regional needs in education, research and regional development. Internationally significant research clusters as well as educational networks should be developed. The vision involves the aim that Seinäjoki UAS with the other HEIs in the region should create permanent collaborative agreements with enterprises and public organization for international projects. The aim is also that Seinäjoki UAS should offer international degrees and have a great number of joint/double/multiple degree programmes in each education field.

The 2014-2020 EU-Programme is necessary to get financing for the EU-projects implemented in transnational European networks/partnerships and in international networks of EU and non-EU partners. Based on the Internationalization Strategy Seinäjoki UAS is aiming to get financing for 20-25 international projects in teaching, training and research annually. Seinäjoki UAS has participated in former years in several Erasmus IPs, Tempus, Alfa, Leonardo and Culture 2007 Programmes as a partner or coordinator. Now it is coordinating Erasmus MLP aiming to joint European Master Programme in forestry and bioenergy education. The new Programme opens new opportunities for international cooperation projects.

International projects have been seen also as a source of funding for mobility, for the development of international teaching and training and for regional development. Many projects have actually involved students' study or training periods or teachers' work periods abroad, or they have been linked with the students' final theses.

***Expected impact of the participation in the Programme on the modernisation of Seinäjoki UAS (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda) in terms of the policy objectives Seinäjoki UAS intend to achieve.***

Within the context of the 2014-2020 EU programme for education, training, youth and sport "Erasmus for all" the strategy of Seinäjoki UAS is to support lifelong learning and the achievement of an EHEA and the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge-based society with a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs. The aim

is also to improve the quality of education and training, to support the competitiveness of Europe and Seinäjoki UAS as a study destination of HE and to promote global understanding between people and contribution to the sustainable development of HE in third countries.

The key actions of the "Erasmus for all" programme, which Seinäjoki UAS want to implement, include 1) transnational and international learning mobility of first/second cycle students including adult learners, teachers and staff, 2) the cooperation for innovation and good practices between HEIs by developing double/multiple/joint programmes, multidisciplinary transnational cooperation projects, IPs and transnational strategic partnerships and networks (e.g. West Finland HEInet), 3) support for capacity building in third countries through mobility and international projects and 4) support for policy reform aiming at modernization of education and training.

The expected impact of participation in the Programme on the modernisation of Seinäjoki UAS:

- 1) Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs: Increased employability of the Finnish and International graduates and mobility of work force and researchers (completed HE degrees/avoided drop-outs, tailored student guidance to inform study choices, support for research and entrepreneurial skills, start-ups, social integration).
- 2) Improving the quality and relevance of HE: Improved key-competencies and skills of the graduates (designing the programmes with employees, career and systematic student guidance, monitoring the career paths of former alumni students, opportunities for personalized blended virtual learning, support for professional development of staff and reward of excellence, include internationalization in the degree programmes).
- 3) Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation: Mobility belongs to education and work of staff, Seinäjoki UAS attracts students, academics and researchers from EU and non-EU (increased student mobility: 20% in 2020, credits gained abroad fully recognized, ECTS, DS, EQF in use, guidance and access in practicalities, 20 international projects annually).
- 4) Making the knowledge triangle work: Linking HE, research and business for excellence and regional development: Increased economic growth and wellbeing in the region (SO University Consortium, joint regional planning and defined key- priorities, Japan and Latin America Centers of knowledge networks, Seinäjoki UAS as Ltd in 2014).
- 5) Improving governance and funding: Effective apply/use of funding (efforts on the strengths, developing HRM).

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