

Policy for the management of staff international mobility

Contact Officer

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Purpose

This policy sets out the:

- principles and processes for staff international mobility, both outgoing and incoming
- responsibilities of professional support departments (in particular the International Experience team, the Research Office, and academic Institutes) in managing and supporting staff international mobility.

Overview

For the purposes of this policy, **outgoing international mobility** describes an opportunity to spend a defined period at an overseas host institution, normally a Higher Education Institution (HEI) but it may also be a research organisation or other educational organisation, for defined purposes which include:

- initiating a new partnership
- developing and strengthening an existing exchange or study abroad partnership
- engaging in teaching, research, training, professional development.

Conversely, an academic or other professional from a non-UK HEI or other organisation coming to spend a specific period at UW may be defined as **incoming international mobility**.

It is recognised that there are other activities, such as study tours, field work and research data collection, which may involve spending a period in another country. This policy does not apply to such activities unless they are formally hosted by an overseas institution. The policy also does not apply to attending or presenting at international conferences even if funding has been awarded by an external body for such activity.

Scope

The policy applies to academic, research and professional staff at the University of Worcester (UW) wishing to engage in outgoing international mobility and to staff managing and supporting international mobility, both outgoing and incoming.

1. Introduction

1.1. The University provides opportunities for both academic and professional support staff to gain a greater understanding of different cultures and different modes of learning through both outgoing and incoming mobility, and to develop their skills and competencies through engaging in teaching, research and other activities in an international context.

1.2. Staff international mobility is also central to developing existing and new partnerships which will create opportunities for UW students to engage in international mobility with all the benefits that brings.

2. Outgoing mobility funded through Erasmus + Key Actions

2.1 Funding is available through [Erasmus + Key Action 1](#) to support staff visits, lasting from 2 days to 2 months excluding travel time, to visit exchange partnership institutions for the following purposes:

- Staff Mobility for Teaching - minimum 8 hours teaching on partner HEI accredited courses
- Staff Mobility for Training - open to HEI teaching and non-teaching staff in the form of training events abroad (excluding conferences) and job shadowing/observation periods/training at a partner HEI or another relevant institution
- Organisational support - for scoping visits and to support student and staff mobility in a variety of ways including updating course information, cultural or linguistic preparation or to support incoming participants.

2.2 The total funding available to the University through *Erasmus + Key Action 1* for a defined period is announced periodically, usually in the early summer. The Worcester International Exchange and Study Abroad Co-ordinator calculates how much is available for each Institute and for professional departments and informs the Head of Institute/Head of Service or Department.

2.3 Institutes and professional departments issue a 'call' to their staff planning to undertake international mobility. The Institute decides which members of staff will be supported and informs the Worcester International Exchange and Study Abroad Co-ordinator.

2.4 The total cost of international mobility for each Institute and professional departments is calculated. Where the cost is less than the allocation of funds to the Institute or professional department, the Institute or professional department will have opportunity to engage additional staff in international mobility. Where the costs are greater than the allocation a panel consisting of representatives from across Institutes and professional departments will be gathered and recommendations for funding will be made based on the criteria as outlined in Erasmus + Key Action 1 guidelines and the University's Internationalisation strategy.

2.5 It is the responsibility of the Worcester International Exchange and Study Abroad Co-ordinator to liaise with staff awarded a period of international mobility through Erasmus + Key Action 1 to complete the required Erasmus + documentation. Staff intending to undertake a teaching or training visit under Erasmus + Key Action 1 will need to negotiate an agreement which defines the target learning outcomes and lists the rights and obligations of each party.

2.6 Work including travel and attending meetings funded under Erasmus+ Key Actions 2 and 3 does not apply to this policy.

2.7 On completion of the international mobility visit, staff must complete an online report. Failure to submit the final report will result in not being considered for any funding under any Erasmus Key Actions in

the future (including projects funded under Key Action 2 and 3).

3. Outgoing mobility funded through other external sources

3.1 Funding is available from various external sources for international mobility, most commonly to support a defined programme of research, although funding may also support a combination of research, teaching, professional development and other activities. Examples of such funding include: Fulbright Scholar and Professional Awards, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - Research Fellowship, international fellowships managed and applied for via the Royal Society, the British Academy, the Academy of Medical Sciences and the Royal Academy of Engineering, Exchange Visits under the RISE scheme, fellowships under the Endeavour Research Programme. This is not an exhaustive list and staff should work with the Research Funding Office to identify opportunities.

3.2 Staff who wish to apply for such opportunities should engage with [the standard processes for the development and approval of research bids](#). However, it is particularly vital that staff discuss the implications of such awards with their line manager and/or Head of Institute before submitting bids as the mobility will often be for an extended period of time, requiring replacement staffing for that period.

3.3 In instances where an award is paid directly to the University and includes the full direct costs of replacing the member of staff for the duration of the mobility, the member of staff will continue to be paid a salary by the University.

3.4 In instances where an award is paid directly to the member of staff (normally for accommodation and other living expenses during the period of mobility, for travel to and from the host institution, and for expenses associated with research and other activities) rather than covering the University's costs of replacing the member of staff, the member of staff will normally be placed on unpaid leave for the duration of the mobility, allowing his/her salary to cover the costs of replacement teaching and other activities.

3.5 There may be cases where the funding for the member of staff does not equate to their current salary. In these instances, it may be agreed by the Head of Institute to continue to pay some portion of the member of staff's salary during the international mobility and/or provide replacement teaching cover. This agreement and the size of the portion/teaching replacement will depend on a range of factors including: prestige of the award, fit with Institute and University strategy, benefits arising from the period of mobility. This should be agreed with the Head of Institute at the point of application.

3.6 In these instances, members of staff may be asked to sign an agreement that requires them to return to the University for a defined period at the end of the international mobility.

4. Outgoing mobility with no external funding

4.1 There may be occasions when staff seek to engage in international mobility where there is no funding available through *Erasmus +* or any other external funder. Most commonly this will be to visit existing partners or potential new partners outside the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA).

4.2 In these instances, funding should be sought through the Institute. Where feasible, and where more than one subject discipline or Institute is partnered/seeking partnership with the same international partner institution, it is recommended that staff form a small delegation for the purposes of visits.

5. Incoming mobility

5.1 Incoming mobility will normally take one of two forms:

- visits from academic or professional staff from existing or potential international partner HEIs to develop and strengthen that partnership; engage in teaching or training; or engage in scoping activities for future student visits
- visits from academics or researchers from HEIs and other organisations to engage in a programme of research or other academic activity. These visits can be funded from various sources in the UK, the EU and the rest of the world. A few examples would include the Newton International and Advanced Fellowships, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - Research Fellowship, Fullbright Scholars, Fellowships from the Royal Society, the British Academy, the Academy of Medical Sciences and the Royal Academy of Engineering, Exchange Visits under the RISE scheme. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

Process of applying for a visit

5.2 If a member of staff from an existing or potential partner requires a letter of invitation for a visit or in order to tender for an Erasmus grant in their home institution or to apply for a visa, this will be provided by the Head of International Experience, setting out the dates and the purpose of the visit and any other relevant information.

5.3 Researchers or academics wishing to visit the University to undertake a programme of research and/or other academic activity should submit the **Visiting Academic application form**.

5.4 The application will be forwarded to the relevant Institute. An assessment will be made of whether the Institute is willing and able to accommodate the visit. In addition, where the visitor is outside the EU/EEA, the International Experience team will identify any potentially prohibitive visa issues.

5.5 Visiting academics are normally expected to pay a standard fee that will be determined by the period of their visit. In addition, they may be expected to pay specific research costs relating to e.g. lab space and consumables. Institutes may request the waiver of the standard fee where there is a strong rationale for the visit based on e.g. strategic fit with the Institute/University; excellence of the researcher; benefits arising from the visit. Institutes may also decide to cover the specific research costs.

5.6 If it is decided to accept the visit, an offer letter will be sent confirming the period of the visit, the Institute, the main Institute contact, the agreed fee and any other details (such as induction programme and accommodation options) or requirements (such as additional evidence of funding for the visit). The offer letter will be copied to the Institute research lead and the relevant Head of Institute. If the researcher requires an Academic Visitor Visa for up to 12 months, the invitation letter should be used as evidence for the application. For visits over 12 months' duration, Human Resources (HR) will need to assist in the application for a Tier 5 Visa.

5.7 In instances where a visitor has been awarded a competitive incoming mobility fellowship (e.g. Newton Fellowship, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellowship) the Research Office will liaise with HR, the International Experience Team and the Institute to ensure that the visitor has the appropriate visa and that all required documentation is in order. Individuals awarded these and similar fellowships are not required to submit an application as outlined above.

Support during the visit

5.8 The main responsibility for supporting visitors falls upon the host Institute(s) and the main point of contact. However, the International Experience team can offer advice on accommodation and travel to Worcester and provide a Welcome Pack with useful maps, booklets and small corporate gifts. The International Experience team will also assist with campus or city tours on request and more general support during the visit.

5.9 It is good practice to provide an induction for visitors appropriate to the length and nature of the visit and to introduce visitors to all relevant academic and professional staff. Institutes are also encouraged

to create opportunities for visitors to engage widely with the University through e.g. presenting at research seminars and conferences, attending Institute away days, engaging with training and development activities.

At the end of the visit

5.10 Visitors, particularly those from partner institutions, may require the University to report on the visit or to sign off paperwork confirming they have completed what was required of them. The International Experience team or the Research Office will support Institutes to provide the requisite information/confirmation when and if required.

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