

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (hereafter XAMK) strategy aims to cooperate successfully with international partners and networks. This cooperation should benefit students during their studies so that very many of them can graduate with strong international skills. The strategy emphasises contributing to research, high quality of education, development and innovation with and through the partner network. Mobility opportunities and international cooperation are important tools to reach results.

Continuous development of international dimension in education on all four campuses is essential part of implementation of internationalisation. XAMK has 54 bachelor programs and 23 master's programs. There are some 9000 students and 750 faculty and staff members. Education is given in the fields of technology, communication and transport, culture, natural sciences, natural resources and the environment, tourism, catering and domestic services, social services, health and sports and social sciences, business and administration, humanities and education.

The criteria for choosing partners are following:

- Possibilities for successful, efficient and high-quality student exchanges and traineeships. This means in practice sufficient offer for studies in English or other languages suitable for both parties of cooperation.
- Cooperation possibilities for teacher and staff exchanges and joint teaching activities, including possibilities for Double Degree Programs
- Cooperation possibilities for RDI-activities
- Partner universities, which have a potential to cooperate successfully with several study programs, are preferred.

Geographical areas:

South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences cooperates with HEIs and enterprises in European countries, Asia, Africa, South and North America and Oceania, in other words, the whole world. XAMK has a wide partner network with over 300 partners in over 40 countries. The most important area for mobility activities is Europe.

Main target areas of XAMK's international activities are in neighboring areas, Northern Europe and Russia.

Objectives and target groups of mobility: The main objective of the mobility activities is excellent employability of the graduates. Mobility is one of the tools to develop personal skills to reach this objective.

Students are the primary target group. Besides, for example Erasmus+ funds, South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences allocates its own budget funds to boost mobility. Both outgoing and incoming students (partners) are informed regularly about the exchange study and training possibilities.

All over two-month exchange, study and training periods are individually tailored to fit the student's study plan. The outgoing students are offered sufficient funding to carry out their exchange and training periods abroad. Finnish and foreign degree students of XAMK are offered the same possibilities. Each student is monitored before, during and after his/hers mobility period. Racial, cultural, gender or any other kind of discrimination is prohibited.

The main aim of the teacher and staff exchanges are to strengthen the cooperation with the partners and to promote and strengthen the student mobility. RDI possibilities are also often taken up during the exchanges.

The management sets the targets for teacher, staff and RDI mobility annually. Heads of the Units take teacher and staff exchanges systematically up during annual career development discussions with their personnel.

The incoming teacher, staff and RDI mobility is strengthened through international theme weeks within departments. For these weeks, a larger group of partner teachers and staff are invited to XAMK.

In XAMK most of the mobility is carried out during the first cycle of studies. The second cycle students are also offered the possibility, but most of them are employed during their studies. This makes the participation to especially long-term exchanges or training often difficult. XAMK does not offer third cycle studies.

Participation to intensive courses and summer schools abroad and in Finland are the main tools for short-term mobility (under two months).

Double Degrees:

South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences is active in developing double degree programs with partners. The fields of activity for the moment are Building services engineering, Environmental engineering, Logistics and Business logistics, Information technology, Energy engineering, Business management, Tourism and service business and Nursing. Double degree programs are done both with EU and non-EU partners. A large part of the graduates in double degree programs come outside of the EU, as non-EU students are often motivated to obtain a European degree.

South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (XAMK), is a higher education institution of lifelong learning, and a strong implementer of research, development and innovation activities (RDI), with a special strength on its expertise in Northern Europe and Russia. The strategic development targets are as follows: Promote regional development through RDI activities based on the degree programmes of XAMK; reinforce interactions between RDI activities, education, and working life and business, and strengthen international cooperation and partnerships.

XAMK has applied for funding for Erasmus+ global mobility. XAMK has also applied for funding concerning Erasmus+ KA2 funding and is continuously looking for possibilities to join KA2 activities.

XAMK's focus areas and (spearheads of competence) are: 1. Digital Economy (digital information management; electronic storage and archiving; cyber safety and data centres); 2. Forest, the Environment and Energy (fiber processes, environmental safety, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency; forestry and timber construction; material technology); 3. Sustainable well-being (promotion of health and well-being; the young inclusion and prevention of social exclusion; tourism and business services; welfare technologies); 4. Logistics and Marine Technology & Transport (maritime risk management and control systems; maritime, port, city, railway and supply logistics; transport corridors and chains; logistics services) and 5. Creative Industries (gamification, service design, restorative environments, business ecosystems).

Increasing the number of graduates: The objective is to get in talented students and to implement the studies efficiently. South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences student recruitment activities and student quality feedback are key elements for increasing graduation results. A wide range of activities are being used

for student recruitment, such as www promotion, participation for student fairs, presence in social media, parent's evening, contacts with enterprises etc. The number of applicants/starting place has been rising.

Increasing quality and relevance: The objective is to increase the quality and relevance to ensure good employability of the graduates and student satisfaction. XAMK policy is to gather systematically feedback from students, enterprises, international partners, teachers & staff, employers and other cooperating parties. This feedback is used to develop and modify curricula, individual courses and, when needed, structure of the degree programmes.

Improving internationalisation: XAMK sets annual targets for both student and staff mobility by study sectors. The meeting of the targets is monitored regularly. At present, some 15-20 % of the students study abroad one or two semesters, or complete over two-month practice abroad during their studies.

Students are informed about the exchange and training possibilities abroad regularly. The work is shared by International Services personnel and teachers. All students from all degree programs have a possibility to apply for exchange. The studies abroad are included to degree at XAMK.

Strengthening the links between education, business and research: The objective is to constantly strengthen the interaction between XAMK and the business life. Regional development is one of the legal responsibilities of universities of applied sciences in Finland. XAMK has close contacts with working life and continues this reach. The RDI projects are often practically orientated, the goal is to benefit especially regionally important issues but also to bring the results to students and education.

Ensuring efficient funding: The objective is to put funds into beneficial use. XAMK budgets its international and other activities annually. The allocation of funds is monitored constantly. For internationalisation, student exchanges and traineeships over two months are preferred to obtain good learning results for future employment.