

ERASMUS policy statement 2021-27

NLA University College

NLA University College has been awarded the Erasmus+ Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) for 2021-2027

Internationalization has a central role in the institutional strategy of NLA University College (NLA). NLA believes that international cooperation contributes to a better quality and relevant education. To educate candidates fit for the modern multicultural society and globalized labour market, internationalization will be integrated in all academic activities carried out at NLA.

NLA University College is a private Christian college with campuses in Bergen, Oslo and Kristiansand. NLA has a Christian foundation of values and provides research-based education in the areas of education (including teacher education), journalism, intercultural studies, theology and religion, music, and business. NLA's vision is to contribute to the formation of ethical consciousness and promote the fundamental Christian values such as respect towards creation and human dignity, intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity.

To provide high quality and relevance in education for the modern intercultural society, NLA aims to strengthen its international profile by developing both its existing and new measures aimed at internationalization. NLA's strategy plan states that NLA University College (1) will have an international educational collaboration that contributes to increased educational quality and understanding across cultures, and (2) help equip students and staff to meet the multicultural society.

NLA has the following main internationalization targets:

- To increase both outgoing and incoming student mobilities
- To further focus on training mobility for students
- To increase number of staff mobilities
- To increase participation in international projects
- To establish programmes aimed towards international students

For the Erasmus period of 2021-27, NLA's main target will be to significantly increase the number of outgoing student mobilities. A mobility period offers students a unique possibility to develop their language skills, intercultural competencies and personal growth. Mutual mobility provides NLA's campuses with an international student body and staff that contribute to enhancing the quality of the learning environment for the Norwegian students at NLA. Exchange students can benefit from attending different programmes and courses than those offered by their own institution, especially those who come from countries with less developed higher education systems. NLA receives many international students from developing countries, which is made possible through the funding of the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility programme.

Staff mobility also contributes to the strengthening and increase of student mobilities, international collaboration, and exchange of best practices that benefit the students, particularly those that choose not to participate in any mobility programmes. Through mobilities, the research and non-academic staff members become more informed of NLA's institutional partners and mobility programmes, and influence the learning and working environment with their new international experiences.

The international office (IO) at NLA has an active, facilitating role in the institution, and participates regularly in faculty meetings and promotes mobility. IO provides individual support to all mobility participants before, during and after the mobility period, and informs faculties of relevant calls for international project funding.

While the main focus for the next Erasmus+ period remains on KA1 Learning mobility of individuals, NLA will also encourage participation in KA2 Cooperation among organisations and institutions. The goal is to participate in at least one project within Cooperation Partnerships during the programme period. NLA will continue to focus on developing a high-quality portfolio of agreements with carefully selected partners that are mutually beneficial. Preferably anchored in common research areas, these strategic partnerships will contribute to an increased quality in teaching, research, collaboration and mobility opportunities.

Internationalization is a dynamic, continuous process that is highly prioritized in the institutional strategy of NLA. The strategic planning, work and promotion has led to a significant increase in staff mobility in the last couple of years. By participating in the Erasmus+ programme, NLA has gained access to resources, funding and network that has been crucial to the internationalization work of the institution. Through the support of the programme, NLA has been able to enhance the quality and relevance of its study programmes, build synergies with organisations and institutions from all over the world, and give opportunities for NLA students and staff members to develop their intercultural competencies and become global citizens.

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