

Erasmus Policy Statement

QM's European Strategy is an integral part of our Strategic Plan 2006-10 and, as with the wider International Strategy, the European Strategy will contribute to all the Key Objectives of the Strategic Plan: teaching and learning; research; regional affairs; and sustainability. Within the European Strategy, Erasmus has a central role in facilitating collaborative links with other European higher education institutions and in fostering learning opportunities for QM students and for students coming to QM from our partner institutions and for staff mobility.

Our priorities for the period 2007-13 will be:

- To engage with the establishment and development of European inter-institutional partnerships more systematically, seeking critical mass and ensuring reciprocity in such matters as student exchange.
- To build on our Erasmus/Socrates links to develop vigorous activities in one or more of the following, in addition to student exchange
 - Staff exchange
 - Joint research projects
 - Joint teaching programmes
 - Three-way projects with industry and with other HE institutions
- To review our current portfolio of partnerships to concentrate on the most productive links and seek to identify new ones that fit with our priorities.
- To review and continuously improve our systems to ensure that support for the admission and care of Erasmus students will be efficient, effective and applicant friendly.
- To expand links with European universities, particularly at postgraduate level
- To integrate Erasmus with our Learning and Teaching Strategy and in particular, to optimise the opportunities for our students to engage with the Erasmus and Life Long Learning programme in the context of the Strategy.

Erasmus activities will be publicised to all QM students and staff as widely as possible. They will be publicised to the QM staff and student community via Internal College communications tools, including the monthly Bulletin and via the Intranet. They will be publicised to students specifically throughout their association with QM, from statements of Erasmus opportunities in the prospectus which will help to inform their choice of university, through information included in orientation and induction on their arrival at QM and through specific promotional campaigns. The EUC and European Policy Statement will be displayed on the College external website and the intranet.

QM is committed to the provision of equality of opportunity for all its students and staff. Article 5 of the College Charter states that the College

should carry out its work "in a spirit of tolerance and freedom of opinion, mutual concern and community service". All students and staff of the College will be treated equitably and will not be accorded less favourable treatment on such grounds as gender, age, marital status, disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, religious or political beliefs.

Erasmus students register as part of QM's long established and successful Study Abroad programme designed for students at an overseas university who would like to study with us for one or two semesters: each semester we welcome some 300 Study Abroad students. We operate a course unit (credit) system, which allows students to take courses from a variety of departments and makes transfer of credit straightforward. A full course load is four courses for each semester of study. Students are issued with a transcript of their grades at the conclusion of their studies.

Many departments offer pre-registration for their courses. Each department has a member of academic staff responsible for Erasmus students and their academic progress. Erasmus students are fully integrated, both in class and in their accommodation, with students from the UK and from many other countries around the world.

Students are offered accommodation on, or within a few minutes walk of, the campus, in cases where the partner university in question also offers university accommodation to QM students. Otherwise, students are given assistance in finding off-campus accommodation. College accommodation is of a high standard and students will, typically, be offered accommodation in a modern, self-catered, single study bedroom with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.

QM offers a full range of support services to Erasmus as to other students, including access to our well-established pre-sessional and in-sessional English language courses. Other support services include Advice and Counselling and Student Health Services.

QM encourages staff mobility within Erasmus and other international links where this is considered to contribute to the College's overall strategic objectives and the academic goals of the department concerned. We are committed to developing multi-layered partnerships with European universities and will support staff mobility in this context.

We have a number of robust mechanisms in place to ensure high quality in student placements and these are being reviewed and strengthened. The precise arrangements differ depending on the needs of the department and the subject area concerned, but are specified in writing with partner universities. The majority of our Erasmus links are based on long-standing academic and personal connections and collaborations

and consequently there is a good relationship and understanding between QM departments and their partners about student needs. Arrangements deal with academic progress and assessment; academic advising; pastoral care; access to healthcare; and accommodation. All students going on an Erasmus placement must have an individual meeting with QM's Erasmus coordinator.

The largest number of placements is connected with QM's School of Modern Languages and its practices are used here as an example of the measures QM has in place. All students are issued with a 'study abroad handbook' which sets out clearly the expectations placed on the student and on the partner university.

Students must submit a study abroad plan to the School, are given advance briefing and must have an individual meeting with QM's Erasmus coordinator.

Students are required to pass a minimum of 12 units from their first and second year in order to progress to the year abroad and to ensure that they are properly prepared academically. Whilst on their year abroad they are required to complete either a dissertation, a learning Log, or sit university examinations. These assessments will produce a grade for the appropriate course credit, comprising 2cu. Students are required to complete it to a "satisfactory standard" in order to progress to the final year of their degree.

While abroad, students are contacted on a monthly basis to provide appropriate support. A specific member of staff is the first point of contact and oversees the preparation for and completion of the year abroad.