

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

The Guildhall School's vision is to be an international centre of excellence and global leader of creative and professional practice in the performing arts. Our mission is to train and educate musicians, actors and theatre technicians to the highest international standards; support creativity, innovation and risk; lead cultural change; excite and inspire as many people as we can reach. We aim to prepare our students for successful careers in the performing arts industries. International mobility is key to the development of music and drama professionals within this modern multi-cultural society and the Erasmus activities are only part of the School's wider international strategy. About 30% of all students are from outside the UK, typically representing over 45 nationalities.

One of the School's main strategic aims is to work with partners to create an international arts and learning centre without rival; encouraging staff and students to find their voice, develop their craft and artistry, draw inspiration from practitioners across the art forms and engage with the audiences of the future. We aim to deliver the transformational investment needed to sustain a worldclass centre of excellence for training and performance.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) monitors partnership agreements on an annual basis and all new partnerships proposals and requests are put to the SMT for review before approval. These decisions are informed by the a) suitability of institution – judged against School strategy and b) suitability of activity – risk and practicalities. The range of partnership activities is wide, from student and staff mobility exchanges (Erasmus and others outside Europe), visiting student initiatives (e.g. with Tokyo College), joint research activities (UK and European), use of professional partners in formative activities in the curricula (e.g. the London Symphony orchestra, the Royal Opera House) and artistic activities (e.g. links with Central Academy of Drama in Beijing and the Arts Educational Schools (ArtsEd) in acting). Geographical areas are not specifically taken in to consideration as the primary driver is the opportunity that the partnership has to enhance the School's curricula (classical and jazz music, drama and technical theatre) and the opportunities for students, its research interests, its widening participation agenda, or its artistic programming.

There is wide consultation of those departments likely to be involved in managing the practicalities of any partnership, and each partnership activity that falls outside the Erasmus scheme must be governed by a memorandum of agreement (an institutional level agreement) and an agreement of collaboration for each specific activity. The School undertakes due diligence checks to ensure that each partner is governed effectively, is financially sustainable and is committed to equality and diversity. For student exchange partnerships particular attention is given to ensuring that the partner institution can provide equivalent learning opportunities.

Student mobility is offered to those in their first and second cycles. The most important objectives of our mobility activities are an extension of our main strategic aims. We aim to recruit the most outstanding aspiring young musicians, actors and theatre technicians from around the world, train and educate them to the highest international

standards, support them with continually improved services and facilities, and prepare them for successful careers in the performing arts.

The investment priorities set out in the School's Strategic Plan: Planning for Peak Performance (2012 revision) also support staff mobility (in addition to Erasmus) to allow staff to conduct masterclasses around the world, ensuring that the School is promoted globally to the fullest extent, particularly to potential overseas students interested in first and second cycle study.

Forging direct links with the professions is a key activity across all programmes and is fundamental to delivering the School's vision and mission; work placements form one type of these links and are a particular feature within the Music Therapy, Technical Theatre Arts and Training Actors programmes. The School offers student placements within the UK and overseas and encourages and facilitates students to find their own placements. New opportunities are now possible within the framework of the Erasmus scheme.

There is in place a rigorous approval process for determining the suitability of a placement and employer in relation to the specifics of an individual programme's requirements. The format and coverage of a placement are outlined in the programme handbook, and there is detailed documentation relating to both the responsibilities of the student whilst on placement (including maintaining contact with the School) and the responsibilities of the organisation and placement supervisor.

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The School is actively involved in projects and thematic networks in areas of music & drama through membership of international organisations such as the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC) and attendance of the AEC conference for Erasmus co-ordinators. The School has successfully hosted three international conferences involving representatives from approximately 180 institutions, several of whom benefited from Staff Erasmus funding to attend. We anticipate further partnerships and staff visits to develop from these and subsequent international conferences.

The School's Teaching and Learning Strategy clearly outlines our commitment to staff development, and staff are strongly encouraged to take part in the Staff Teaching and Training mobility and pass on their experiences and good practice to students and colleagues. The sharing of good practice outside the institution takes place through Conservatoires UK, the Innovative Conservatoire and Ecole des Ecoles, Pentacon, AEC networks, guest teaching and master classes, conference presentations and publication.

At the core of the School's principles is the aim to provide opportunities (for staff and students) to engage across departments and divisions, to create new contexts for work, to learn from and with peers, and to develop entrepreneurial initiatives. This aim is at the heart of new developments in cooperation projects in teaching and training.

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The School aims to not only heighten students' abilities, but widen their expectations. Participants are more likely to progress to postgraduate study (both at the School and internationally) as a result of their positive experiences; bringing with them a fresh

outlook and diversity to the student population. A thirst for exploring is often borne of exchanges, as the students experience a wider range of teaching methods and form key contacts and links which will underpin a successful career in their field.

The School aims to attract and develop worldclass staff to deliver innovative teaching and research and knowledge exchange. Teachers bring this fresh outlook into the classroom and consequently encourage students to take risks, seize opportunities to broaden their horizons and develop sustainable careers. The Programme facilitates engagement with professional practitioners outside of the UK and opens doors to a variety of professional pathways.

The School organises mobility and the award of grants in a fair and transparent way, in line with the regulations set out by the British Council. A number of methods are used to give visibility to our Erasmus activities. The Erasmus University Charter and EPS will be published on the School's website, and will be presented to and monitored by the SMT.

The School is dedicated to providing transition to the professions, links to the creative industries, entrepreneurship and employability. The creative industries are the fastest growing sector in the UK economy, and are characterised by SMEs that need a flexible workforce. As well as supporting students in becoming masters of their craft, it is essential that we ensure they are ready to be autonomous, adaptable and pro-active in a professional world. They need to understand their own value propositions and how to develop audiences, collaborate and manage finances. A huge strength in the School's approach to professional transition lies in the proactive use of visiting artists in masterclasses, productions and as external assessors to enhance student experience in connecting to the professional world.

For the School, as a small and specialist organisation, the Programme provides a well understood and managed framework for student and staff mobility which it would be difficult for us to set-up, with such variety, on our own. With a common framework across Europe there are greater efficiencies that maximise the value to be gained from these arrangements. What the programme also provides is a framework to be used internally to leverage other funds to support staff and student mobility outside of the Erasmus framework. It also benefits us by fostering self-reflection, allowing us to monitor and review our processes, as seen through the eyes of the British Council and partner institutions. We have procedures in place to gather high quality feedback that feeds forward to our continued development.