Student exchange agreements

Study Abroad Office

Unit name goes here

Application form to set up new student exchange agreement

### A black text on a white background Description automatically generatedTypes of Mobility agreements

Mobility agreements can be conducted in various ways:

* **Reciprocal** **/ Exchange** - i.e. both institutions sending students to each other for short-term study visits on a fee-waiver basis,[[1]](#footnote-1) or
* **Non-Reciprocal -** i.e. one institution sending their students to another for short-term visits, one-way only (can be on fee-waiver or fee-paying basis)

This document refers only to reciprocal / exchange arrangements; information about the approval process for non-reciprocal partnerships can be found on the Study Abroad website.[[2]](#footnote-2)

### Approval process for reciprocal student mobility

Formal approval must be sought for any arrangement whereby University of Reading students are likely to spend some of their programme studying at a University in another country. The University has a responsibility to satisfy itself about the good standing of a prospective partner or agent, and of their and our capacity to fulfil the designated roles in the proposed arrangement before any student mobility agreement will be initiated and any student mobility can take place.

To enter into a new student exchange agreement an application addressing the listed criteria based on the QAA Quality Code relating to Study Abroad must be submitted, and receive formal approval of the Study Abroad Partnership Committee before it can progress. (application - page 3 onwards)

1. Agreements covering one subject area only: Formal approval of the relevant Head of School / Department will be required. Incoming students can normally only study in that subject area,
2. Agreements covering more than one subjects area: Formal approval of the relevant Heads of Schools / Departments covered by the agreement will be required. Incoming students can normally only study in the subject areas outlined in the proposal
3. University-wide agreements (managed by the Study Abroad Office): The Study Abroad Partnership Committee will approve the application on behalf of Global Engagement Strategy Board. Incoming students may select modules of study from those available to Study Abroad Programme students from across the University of Reading.

Before submitting any proposal departments should ensure that they have read and understood the principles outlined in: [University of Reading Procedure for establishing and managing student exchange partnerships](http://www.reading.ac.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?lID=117973&sID=183142)

### Approval Criteria

Approval to enter into any new reciprocal exchange agreement is dependent on the applicant successfully demonstrating to the Study Abroad Partnership Committee that:

1. The proposed partner institution offers suitable and appropriate academic provision.
2. The proposed partnership will be reciprocal i.e. comparable numbers of outgoing students as incoming students.
3. The proposed partner institution offers suitable and appropriate support facilities.
4. The partner will be an attractive opportunity to students

As well as the academic quality of a proposed partner institution, the School / Department should consider costs of travel and living for students, the safety of the location and ongoing student welfare and wellbeing whilst abroad.

### NB: The University will not open a student mobility agreement to suit the needs of one student

### Stages of Approval

The process is as follows:

1. Internal discussion within the School with relevant stakeholders – these could include the Study Abroad Coordinator, School Director of Internationalisation and or Director of Teaching and Learning. The Study Abroad Office (SAO) or Global Partnerships Office (GRO) can also be consulted regarding the proposal.
2. Completion of the form in Annex 1, including School approvals.
3. Submission of the completed form to the SAO.
4. Study Abroad Partnerships Committee scrutiny and decision.
5. SAO will action the Study Abroad Partnerships Committee’s decision, working with partner institution and University Legal Services (where applicable)

The Study Abroad Partnerships Committee will usually scrutinise applications on a monthly basis. Schools /Departments will normally be notified of the final decision within six weeks of submission. This decision will be either:

1. Approval for the proposed agreement: SAO will work with relevant authorities to create and initiate the student exchange agreement with the proposed partner institution.
2. Identification of areas requiring attention, amendment or further exploration and/or information – applicants will have the opportunity to address any concerns raised, and should resubmit the proposal
3. Reject the proposed agreement – applicants will be notified with reasons provided for the decision.

For further information please contact the Head of mobility (email: [m.a.dowse@reading.ac.uk](mailto:m.a.dowse@reading.ac.uk) ; Int. Ext.: 8322).

### Annex 1: Reciprocal Student Mobility Partnership Proposal Form

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Partner details: | | |
| 1. **Legal Name of proposed partner institution** |  | |
| 1. **Address of proposed partner institution:** |  | |
| 1. **Academic Contact person at proposed partner institution: include name-address-phone-fax-e-mail *etc*** |  | |
| 1. **Institutional coordinator at proposed partner institution: include name-address-phone-fax-e-mail *etc*** |  | |
| 2. Nature of agreement: | | |
| 1. **What is the anticipated period of the proposed agreement? Default is 5 years.** |  | |
| 1. **What academic level and disciplines of study does the proposed agreement cover?** If the agreement covers more than one academic discipline at Reading, all parties must provide written confirmation of their consent. |  | |
| 1. **Is the student mobility a compulsory part of a degree, or voluntary?** |  | |
| 1. **How many mobile students is it anticipated will participate (each way) and for what duration (semesters)?** |  | |
| 3**. Rationale for Agreement:** | | |
| 1. **What are the academic or strategic reasons for entering into this agreement?** |  | |
| 1. **Why has the school / department selected this particular institution?** |  | |
| 1. **Is the partner institution a full University (taught and research degrees), a Polytechnic (taught degrees), a publicly funded college or research institute, or a private college or organisation? How does this status impact on the exchange arrangement in terms of sustainability, quality assurance and local regulation?** |  | |
| 4**. Risk assessment** | | |
| 1. **Please include a brief outline of site visit findings which should include a risk assessment and a review of the quality of the academic, teaching and support facilities** | |  |
| 1. **Is the country and area deemed to be safe by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office website (**<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> ) **and is it envisaged that any participants will be safe?** | |  |
| 1. **What risks and hazards are there in the country or locality? What safety standards are employed in facilities that staff/students might be using** | |  |
| 1. **What is the local political and social context? How is the country regarded in relation to human rights and equality of opportunity? Is it politically stable?** | |  |
| 1. **Is the cultural and educational context one with which we are familiar or has commonalities with the UK (i.e. European, Australian etc.). How do qualifications and academic standards relate to our own?** | |  |
| 5**. Degree programme specifications:** | | |
| 1. **List all degree programmes where students will be able to participate in this partnership.**   **Or**  **Is the partnership envisaged for a new degree programme?** |  | |
| 1. **Describe how these programme specifications allow for a study abroad period? E.g. when and for how long for, are there issues with compulsory modules that will be missed?** |  | |
| **6. Study programmes and learning outcomes:** | | |
| 1. **Does the structure of the academic year of the partner institution match that at the University of Reading, therefore enabling mobility? If not, please provide details of how students will be able to fulfil commitments both at their host and home universities.** |  | |
| 1. **What is the language of tuition at the partner institution?** |  | |
| 1. **If students are not to be taught in English, what (if any) level of linguistic competency is required for admission and what measures are in place to ensure that students will achieve the required linguistic standard in order to successfully participate? Who will assess this standard? Please provide details.** |  | |
| **7. Student assessment: [[3]](#footnote-3)** | | |
| 1. **How will Reading students be assessed at the partner institution?** |  | |
| 1. **Is the credit system used at the proposed partner institution fully known and understood? Please explain how it maps onto on the UK credit system** |  | |
| 1. **Are there clear arrangements within the school / department for the conversion of grades and credits?** |  | |
| 1. **What are the implications of credit transfer and the effect on the weighting of the degree classification. (please articulate this clearly here as this information should also be provided to students in advance of their period abroad)** |  | |
| 1. **Will the students miss any examinations or assessment at the University of Reading? What alternative assessment procedures are in place?** |  | |
| 1. **What procedures are in place should a student fail any modules whilst abroad and gain insufficient credits to progress?** |  | |
| **9. Student Support and Information:**  Outgoing students: Facilities at partner institution: | | |
| 1. **What assessment has been made regarding the academic facilities at the proposed partner institution? You should include factors such as library and computing provision, academic and teaching facilities, as well as student support and accommodation. Please give details, including relevant web-links where appropriate.** |  | |
| 1. **What are the arrangements regarding responsibility for pastoral and tutorial support whilst abroad? Please give details.** |  | |
| 1. **Will accommodation be offered at host institution? If not, what support will be offered and when? Please provide details.** |  | |
| 1. **Will the host institution provide an induction / orientation programme to our students upon arrival? Please provide details.** |  | |
| 1. **Are the facilities at the host institution adequate for students with disabilities and or special educational needs? Please give details.** |  | |
| 1. **Are there any additional costs e.g. insurance, visa, inoculations etc, which will be required by participants which could make participation prohibitive?** |  | |
| **Subject area responsibilities** |  | |
| 1. **What procedures are in place should the student return from their study period earlier than anticipated?** |  | |
| Incoming students: |  | |
| 1. **What are the academic requirements of the partner institution, e.g. do they require their students to take particular modules or a certain quantity of credits in particular subject areas?** |  | |

### In making this proposal the School/Department is accepting responsibility to:

* Maintain good communications links with the partner institution to ensure that both parties can continue to fulfil any academic requirements stipulated for the period of the agreement.
* Check that the academic curriculum at the partner institution is of an appropriate quality and level, and will allow students to meet their relevant learning outcomes on their current degree
* Ensure that the partner institution is fully aware of any academic requirements of the relevant Reading School(s)/ Department(s)
* Have the curriculum approved by the appropriate Board of Studies
* Cover the costs related to the development and maintenance of the agreement
* Ensure that appropriate codes are set up in RISIS to record the students’ studies abroad.
* Provide students with information and pre-departure support for example to complete study abroad application forms and to formulate their study plans pre-departure
* Monitor the progress and providing relevant support to Reading students whilst abroad
* Ensure the provision of pastoral and tutorial support for the specific cohort of incoming students that spend time at the University of Reading as part of this agreement
* To actively promote and encourage student participation in the mobility arrangement through talks, information in handbooks and on websites
* To review the level of student participation and the benefits of the partnership prior to requesting that the partnership be renewed
* Liaise with the Study Abroad Office in order to ensure the appropriate registration and administration of incoming and outgoing students in order that their period abroad can be appropriately recognised on transcripts

**University of Reading member of staff proposing the partnership**

I confirm that the above information is correct and that my Department / School approves the proposal

Signed:………………………………………………………… Date:……………………………

Print Name:…… …………………………………………………………….

**Head of School / Department**

I support the above proposal

Signed:………………………………………………………… Date:……………………………

Print Name:…… …………………………………………………………….

Applicants should submit the form below to the Head of Mobility (ext: 8322; [m.a.dowse@reading.ac.uk](mailto:m.a.dowse@reading.ac.uk)); all queries regarding the process to be addressed to the Head of Mobility.

1. Students are not normally required to pay fees to the host institution in the case of reciprocal agreements, but are usually liable for partial or full University of Reading fee depending on the duration of their period abroad. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Please refer to the Study Abroad partnership section on the website: <https://studyabroad.reading.ac.uk/staff/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In accordance with the University’s Code of Practice on Placement Learning assessments provided by a host institution must be accepted as reliable by the home university. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)