

EUROPEAN POLICY STATEMENT

Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) is an innovative and multidisciplinary institution of higher education which creates international competitiveness and well-being for Southwest Finland. With its community of 10,000 members teaching, studying and carrying out research at three faculties and in over seventy different degree programmes in four fields of study, TUAS acts as a significant agent in the internationalisation of the region and its working life.

Internationalisation at TUAS is on the other hand based on the Vision for higher education and research in 2030, and International strategy for higher education and research 2017–2025 in Finland. On the other hand, internationalisation is based on the overall strategy of TUAS 2019-2031, the Turku City Strategy and the Regional Strategy for Southwest Finland. TUAS seeks to enhance the visions outlined in all these strategies.

The objective of international activities at TUAS is to strengthen the readiness of students and staff to work in an international environment, to diversify and improve the quality of education and research, and to promote the internationalisation of Southwest Finland. Internationalisation of education and research is seen as a way of responding to the growing demands for working life skills, and to the challenges created by multiculturalism in the Finnish society.

At TUAS international perspective is integrated into all the operations: education, research, and development and innovation (RDI) activities as well as working life co-operation. International activities include e.g. student and trainee mobility, teacher and staff mobility, teaching in foreign languages, offering language and cultural studies for students, and providing global education services, such as export of education. In addition, TUAS has international collaboration in terms of curriculum development, double degree and joint programmes and RDI projects. These activities enhance internationalisation in accordance with the TUAS strategy.

International partner institutions and other partners are selected not only on the basis of mutual academic interest in education and research in the field of study in question, but also on the basis of partner's scope and quality of international RDI activities, international partnerships or network memberships, commitment in reciprocal student and staff mobility, and possibilities for cooperation in terms of shared expertise, funding and working languages, for example (English being often used as a lingua franca). TUAS is a member of CARPE, the Consortium on Applied Research and Professional Education, which is a strategic partnership network in Europe.

In addition, the geographical area of the partner is considered important, as TUAS is looking for co-operation in regions that are important for local businesses and organisations in Turku, Salo and Southwest Finland. Each faculty has selected their strategic geographical areas. Even though the main focus for international partnerships is in the Baltic Sea region and Europe, TUAS is planning to strengthen existing or to develop also new long-term collaboration with partner universities and organisations also in Asia (especially China, Japan, Singapore, Vietnam) and Americas (the US, Canada, Brazil).

TUAS strongly encourages students and staff members to participate in mobility programmes. The objective of TUAS is to offer all students good possibilities to either study or do their practical training abroad during the studies. Also exchange students and trainees from partner institutions are welcome study at TUAS. They form an important part of Internationalisation at Home activities on

campuses. In addition, virtual mobility and short-term mobility are encouraged especially for part-time master-level students.

Both academic and non-academic staff members at TUAS are encouraged to participate in mobility programmes, either to teach or to participate in professional training. Exchange teachers and administrative staff from partner institutions are invited to annual International Weeks or other exchange periods hosted by TUAS. During them, both teachers and other staff members meet their international colleagues in order to exchange experiences and best practices and to plan joint projects.

TUAS has created institutional guidelines for double degree agreement process and has several double degree agreements at the bachelor level. The objective is to develop double degrees also at the master level in the near future. A new form of collaboration with international partner universities is joint programmes that TUAS has developed with some of its strategic partners.

Erasmus+ programme projects

To support the goals of internationalisation, TUAS gives priority to and is aiming at continuing to participate actively in international co-operation projects. Thus, the objective of TUAS is to participate also in the Actions of the Erasmus+ programme. As a member of the Consortium on Applied Research and Professional Education (CARPE), TUAS is planning to broaden and deepen its network of strategic collaborators together with businesses and other institutions in Southwest Finland.

The profile of TUAS is known for its innovation pedagogy (Innopeda). Its cornerstones are working-life orientation, flexible curricula, multidisciplinary, renewing teacher and student roles, activating learning and teaching methods, integration between studies and applied RDI activities, versatile and development-oriented assessment, entrepreneurship and internationalization which are integrated with teaching in order to support innovations made on workplaces. Innovation pedagogy bridges the gap between studies and working life, as it provides a working life centered foundation for education and thus, better readiness for entering working life. Both knowledge alliance and capacity building projects are planned to be implemented as part of the innovation pedagogy at TUAS.

Development projects that cohere with this profile focus on the following areas: production, technologies of the future, growth from circular economy, sales, smart operating environments, promoting health and well-being, significance of art, increasing inclusion and agency, and knowledge-based leadership.

Support services for international cooperation projects are offered both at the central administration and faculty level. TUAS has the expertise and infrastructure required for managing international projects. This includes e.g. established practices in planning, implementing and measuring project activities, estimating and sharing resources, assessing possible risks and planning project dissemination, valorisation and sustainability activities.

Participation in the Erasmus+ programme will contribute largely to the quality of education, internationalisation and student experience at TUAS by:

- Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs

Participation in mobility and international cooperation projects will support students and staff members to gain the professional, social and intercultural skills needed in today's multicultural working life. As a result, TUAS can offer its graduates better competitive abilities and thus, better employability in the job market.

In order to comply with non-discrimination objectives, TUAS will not discriminate against any person in the operation or maintenance of the facilities, activities, or services. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, sex, national origin or the presence of any disability. The equality principles have been defined in the Equality Plan approved by the Board of TUAS.

- Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

Participation in projects will help to ensure the high international quality of education and applied research at TUAS. As projects will be implemented in collaboration with other competence and innovative systems in the Southwest Finland and they will focus on strategies of the region and consider needs of working life and businesses, they will strengthen the internationalisation and business life of the region. In addition, students will gain valuable working life experiences and create contacts with possible employers which will lead to better employability.

- Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

Mobility actions will enhance the quality of TUAS performance: the implementation of ECTS and Diploma Supplement as common tools guarantee the quality of mobility activities and transparency of recognition procedures at TUAS. This will facilitate the transfer of learning experiences between partner institutions.

- Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

Through participation in strategic partnerships and networks as well as capacity building and knowledge alliance projects, TUAS will support its operational environment Southwest Finland. These projects will generate readiness of graduates to innovate by integrating teaching, research and development as well as cooperation with working life. Projects can lead to new sustainable ideas, further knowledge or other practices applicable in working life.

- Improving governance and funding

TUAS is committed to support the administration (reporting, monitoring visits etc.) required by the Programme and this will improve both the governance and cost-efficient use of funding at TUAS.