

Erasmus Policy Statement

For the strategic period 2019-2023, Norwegian Defence University College (NDUC) has set as a primary goal to be able to take part in the Erasmus+ programme, not only limited to the mobility projects, but also other actions launched under the Erasmus+ programme. NDUC will comply with all regulations given in the Erasmus Charter of Higher Education.

The Norwegian Defence University College is a university college dedicated to higher education and research in the fields of security and defence policy, military power, leadership and the conduct of war. NDUC is an academically independent institution that provides education at the master and bachelor levels to military professionals from all branches of the Norwegian Armed Forces, their partners and to eligible civilians. NDUC also house two research institutes, Institute of military management and operations (IMLO) and the Norwegian Institute of Defence Studies (IFS).

Norwegian Defence University College will seek cooperation with other universities and higher education institutions (HEI) in Europe engaged in military operation and security issues, bordering our disciplines and fields of expertise.

It is important to build partnerships with civilian HEIs as well, as several civilian institutions conduct research and education of high quality relevant for NDUC, especially at the master level. NDUC have to build strong partnerships that will align with both our research, academic and professional education. Finding the right partners for us, will enhance the quality of education and research conducted at and by NDUC as an institution. NDUCs overall strategic goal for participating in the Erasmus+ programmes, is to ensure the quality of our studies, embed international perspectives in our study programmes, increase credit student mobility and to enhance the knowledge between European military institutions. Initiatives for establishing partnerships will be handled by the Deans office, in close cooperation with the relevant academic disciplines.

The North Sea area has always been strategically important for Norway, both politically and economically.

NDUC will primarily focus on cooperation with countries bordering the North Sea. These countries have long been Norway's foremost trading partners, and building strong relationships also when it comes to military officers- and specialists education, responds well to the national strategy for where

Norway should seek cooperation to improve the quality of education and research. Several of the countries bordering the North Sea are close allies in defence cooperation through international institutions such as NATO and the UN.

Europe and neighbouring countries are important through The EDA (European Defence Agency) where Norway as a third country has an administrative arrangements agreement, enabling us to participate in EDA's projects and programmes, constitutes an important part for our European cooperation within research and defence industry. Connecting with relevant EU-institutions in both the education and defence sector are important to have the strategic overview for Norwegian – EU – relationship. These two sectors, among others, are important stakeholders for military higher education.

Norway and the United States has had a long tradition of mutual exchange and training of officers and specialists. NDUC would like to explore the possibilities and strengthen the relationship by formalisation of agreements on the exchange of officers and specialists with institutions that matches NDUCs professional and academic strengths.

Norwegian Defence University College primary goal for the Erasmus+ programme is to make it easy and attractive for our students to do an exchange semester abroad, particularly in our bachelor programmes.

NDUC has been working on the course design to make room for a mobility window during the 3-year bachelor degrees offered. Our goal is that by 2023, 20 % of our students should have had an exchange period at one of our partner institutions. The students who choose to stay at home, receives at least one international semester module in English with international students in their classroom during their programme.

The bachelor education holds a strong internship component, where the students are out in the different divisions learning the professional skills needed in military operations. Possibilities for internship should be investigated to whether it may be appropriate for mobility periods as well.

Student credit exchange within the scope of Erasmus + will be a new experience to NDUC, but for many years, we have sent officers and specialists to vocational training courses given by organisations like e.g. NATO. These courses are an important part of the international education and training given to officers in the armed forces today. NDUC would like to explore possibilities for participating in vocational training and education within the scope of Erasmus+.

NDUC hosts a handful of international students in the master's degree in military studies. Most of these students come to NDUC through bilateral agreements signed between the ministries of defence with our closest allies, like the United States and North Sea region. NDUC would like to see a higher number of incoming international students, both at the short cycle, as well as in the first and second cycle.

Participating in joint or multiple degrees may be a longer way for NDUC, though we would like to explore possible actions toward study programme cooperation. We have some experience of this at a national level, and it is interesting to explore international cooperation as well.

NDUCs goal is to make partnerships with other HEIs to strengthen the quality and our inclusive participation in international higher education and research.

There are already several initiatives in Europe towards connecting the institutions of military education. Norway as a third country are taking part in some of these actions through the EEA-agreement, and other bilateral administrative agreements between Norway and EU-institutions.

NDUC considers especially the Strategic Partnerships Programme and the Knowledge Alliances for Higher Education under the Key Action 2, as highly relevant for our implementation of international cooperation projects. NDUC see these kind of projects as a possible contributor for the alignment of European security issues and military professional education. The mobility programme under Key Action 1 in the Erasmus+ programme will bring forth the possibility for participating in international education for both student and staff. The cooperation projects will add an extra dimension to our strategy for internationalisation on a longer term.

NDUC is working strategically to enforce all our departments to participate in the exchange of both students and staff.

This requires a reorganisation of our studies, both in structure and core curriculum.

Internationalisation in higher education also implies a pedagogical change in the way we conduct our educational programmes. Digital teaching methods are increasingly more important and relevant for our students.

NDUC will actively promote the Erasmus+ programme to build international network among our academics. This will convey knowledge about our education and research to the public, both national

and internationally. In cooperation with other defence universities in Europe, we may be able to compare and learn from our peers, to give the best education possible for our future officers.

The overall perspective for NDUC participating in the Erasmus+ programme is to embed perspectives of internationalisation in our study programmes, and in this way assure higher quality as well as to endorse excellence and innovation in our education.

Building strong and long-lasting connections to other military universities where we can learn from our peers and exchange our good practices within education is important. In an international perspective, this will enable our students to handle increasingly complex and difficult situations when practising their profession.

Graduates from NDUC must expect to be deployed to international assignments during their first years as young officers. This perspective makes it crucial that NDUC are able to prepare graduates for this part of their working career, embedded through increased mobility in our study programmes.

NDUC compete for the best-qualified students together with the rest of the higher education institutions in Norway. The government sets the number of students admitted, based on reported needs in the sector. It is vital that students get a relevant education with knowledge and skills that immediately make them operational in the different divisions where they practice their profession. This will minimize the danger of having a mismatch between the education we provide and what the employer (different divisions) needs.