



## ERASMUS+ Policy Statement

The University of Music Würzburg (HfM) offers education and training on a high artistic, artistic-pedagogical and academic level, with the goal of providing students successful entry into a career field and to enable an active and responsible organization of music-cultural life.<sup>1</sup> With this objective, the University of Music finds itself at the crossroads of tradition and innovation in coming to terms with the dynamic career possibilities associated with current societal and cultural changes and in developing corresponding teaching and learning opportunities. This includes the development of individual artistic-musical excellence with intensive personal development through engaged instructors, as well as the creation of extensive artistic-pedagogical qualifications and academic competence through teaching and learning opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

Together with the two other Würzburg higher education institutions (JMU and FHWS), the University of Music Würzburg (HfM) contributes to the attractiveness of Würzburg as a University location for students from all over the world. Würzburg is a culturally diverse, cosmopolitan city and offers excellent conditions for study, personal development, creativity and inspiration due to its artistic heritage (medieval fortress, the UNESCO World Heritage Site Baroque Residence, numerous cathedrals), which is indispensable for music students.

The University of Music Würzburg is an institution in which people of various backgrounds, societal groups, regions, nations and cultural connections, as well as those

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<sup>1</sup> Brochure of the University of Music, edited by the University of Music Würzburg, 2017, p.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 7



carrying out various functions, meet and work together. Through these diverse worlds of thought, learning and research is enriched.<sup>3</sup>

International activities are a core part of University life at the HfM. Thus the HfM deserves recognition as an international University of Music. In this context, the HfM aims to internationalize its degree programmes, academic and administrative staff. The ERASMUS+ programme is the most important part of our international activities and thus contributes most to the internationalization of the University.

In 2007, the University established an in-house academic office for foreign exchange (now International Office) to intensify international relations with other universities and to build new relationships. Additionally, as of 2007 the HfM has been part of the ERASMUS+ programme (KA-103) and starting in 2014 the HfM is the ECHE (ERASMUS Charter for Higher Education) - holder. Through this accreditation, our institution is committed to the principles of the ERASMUS+ programme.

While academic exchange was low in 2007 and the HfM only had 8 university collaborations, this year (2020) 12 students (from all music disciplines Bachelor, Master, teaching) applied for an ERASMUS degree course and the number of university collaborations has now risen to over 70. The number of STA- mobilities has also increased since 2008. In 2020, 5 teachers at the HfM submitted an application for an ERASMUS exchange. Others are still waiting to see how the Covid-19 Pandemic will continue to develop. The regular academic exchange not only improves the professional competence of the respective target group, but also intercultural and socio-political skills.

Most students spend the entire academic year at the host university; they receive qualified classes in their main subjects in the host institution. The exchange of teachers as part of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 7



the programme also gives students new impulses for their musical development. This can positively influence their artistic performance and valuable information regarding interpretation (timbre, technique, dynamics, etc.). By playing in various ensembles at the respective host institution, students not only learn new repertoire, but also come into contact with fellow musicians from different cultures. With a one-year stay abroad, students become experts in their host country and thus important ambassadors to pass on their experiences in all areas to students, faculty and staff at their home institution.

Staff mobility in the field of teaching also has a positive effect on the HfM: teachers act as multipliers of ideas and transfer new knowledge to others. For teachers, the ERASMUS program means creative cooperation in the form of masterclasses and joint concerts at the host university. Networking between the partner institutions in the field of teaching means new musical projects on the one hand, and the improvement of the university dialog between other European countries on the other.

While academic exchange has developed positively in terms of quality and quantity, exchange in the area of administration is at a very low level (2 applications in 2020) and therefore needs to be addressed in particular. One challenge is to convey the idea of internationalization, while the language skills necessary for a stay abroad are a completely different challenge.

Based on the experience of our university with the ERASMUS+ programme as described above, the HfM is setting new goals and taking measures to improve the cooperation, which should also contribute to the internationalization of the HfM. In the process of cementing these goals, the HfM will be supported by the [AEC](#) (Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen), the organization which representing the interests of all European music colleges. The HfM has been a member of



the AEC since 2008, which was an important first step toward internationalization. Thanks to this membership, the HfM Würzburg is supported in the following areas:

- Members of the University (the President, teaching staff and staff of the International Office) regularly participate in conferences, international projects and musical events.
- The AEC hosts the digital platform [EASY](#) for student mobility in the ERASMUS+ programme. The HfM has been using the easy database since 2018 and is already on a good path to digitization.
- Thanks to the help of the AEC, the HfM is growing its worldwide network of academic staff and ERASMUS+ coordination, which serves to improve communication at the international higher education level.
- ERASMUS+ coordinators receive support in the implementation of the ERASMUS+ programme. The AEC also provides additional information regarding the ERASMUS+ programme, which takes into account the special needs and advantages of music institutions. For example, ERASMUS+ forms are adapted to fit the specifications of the AEC-members.

The strategic plan of the AEC sets out the following objectives in the form of 4 pillars<sup>4</sup> which are compatible with the new ERASMUS+ objectives (ECHE 2021-27) and are therefore also relevant to the ERASMUS+ policy statement of our institution. The AEC pillars and our goals / improvement measures as HfM are compared in the table below.

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<sup>4</sup> [AEC Strategic Plan 2016-2021](https://www.aec-music.eu/publications/aec-strategic-plan-2016-2021), <https://www.aec-music.eu/publications/aec-strategic-plan-2016-2021>, accessed on May 14th, 2020



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| <p>The Strategic Plan of the AEC</p>                               | <p>Objectives of the HFM</p>   |
| <p>Enhancing quality in Higher Music Education</p>                 | <p>Improvement of the quality of musical education during ERASMUS+ exchange periods (outgoing and incoming):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Increase in the number of ECTS-points brought from abroad to 25 ECTS-credits per semester (outgoing)</li> <li>b) Simplified procedure for transfer credit (automatic and unrestricted)</li> <li>c) Creating Diploma Supplement</li> <li>d) Improvement of the course plan for incoming students, introduction of the lecture series "Musical Life in Germany" in English</li> </ul> |
| <p>Promoting participation, inclusiveness and diversity</p>        | <p>Equal treatment for all students regardless of their social or ethnic background with special regard to the less fortunate ERASMUS+ applicants (outgoing) and the incoming ERASMUS+ students</p>  |
| <p>Strengthening partnership and interaction with stakeholders</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Special emphasis will be placed on ERASMUS+ partnerships with which a regular and qualitative academic exchange takes place</li> <li>b) Strengthening the Eastern European ERASMUS+ partnerships and partnerships with the Baltic countries</li> </ul>   |



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| <p>Fostering the value of music and music education in society</p> | <p>Emphasizing the positive impact of music on society by consciously recognizing the role of the musician</p> <p>Arousing interest in music among socially disadvantaged groups</p> |
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Further objectives of the HFM are to improve the flow of information concerning the application to the ERASMUS+ programme and the support of students during and after mobility. The following measures will be introduced:

- Improvement of the ERASMUS+ website to better structure the presentation of relevant information for students and University staff (incoming and outgoing)
- An additional informational event embedded in the intercultural summer festival with the aim of providing students with in-depth information on current ERASMUS+ partnerships. This is done in the form of an informal consultation with the staff of International Office in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Regular exchange of information with University members regarding the ERASMUS+ programme; additional promotion measures for ERASMUS+ mobility.
- Promotion of the workshops and other events of the AEC to those interested in ERASMUS+ (students and staff) as well as to ERASMUS+ scholarship holders in order to improve the quality of musical education and to promote networking of University members on an international level.
- Encouraging ERASMUS+ alumni to participate in the annual event “Study Abroad” so that those interested in studying abroad can obtain first-hand information.
- Setting up a Facebook group for ERASMUS+ alumni to strengthen the musical ERASMUS+ community



- Supplementing available advisement and communication by setting up video portals for discussion with partners and students and for digital learning, e.g. online language courses.

In addition to the aforementioned objectives, the HfM aims to further the digitalization of the ERASMUS+ programme not only with the EASY database, but also by participating in the program EWP (ERASMUS without Paper). The main issue is online management of the inter-institutional agreements.

The University of Music Würzburg attaches great importance to the sustainability of ERASMUS+ mobility and sets itself the goal of raising the awareness of University members with regard to this topic.

Sources:

1. <https://www.aec-music.eu/publications/aec-strategic-plan-2016-2021>
2. Brochure of the University of Music, edited by the University of Music Würzburg, 2017