

## MUP Policy Statement on International Cooperation

International cooperation and international dimension are key characteristics of Metropolitan University Prague (MUP). The strategy of international cooperation of the university is based on four specialisations conducted entirely in the English language: Anglophone Studies, Asian Studies and International Relations, International Business (Regional Studies and International Business), and International Relations and European Studies. These specialisations constitute firm grounds for a broad range of international cooperation that, nevertheless, encompasses institutional cooperation in all Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral programmes implemented at MUP. The main strategy for the selection of partners for cooperation consists in focusing on the similarity of implemented programmes not only in the area of instruction, but also in the area of research and further academic activities.

International liaisons in all fields of study bring an enriching element to the university in the form of both incoming exchange students and visiting academics. Consequently, the organisational demands arising from international cooperation contribute to the enhancement of the services and activities of the university and to further development. Since its very beginning, the main emphasis of international cooperation at MUP has been placed on the development of student (study stays, traineeships), teacher, and staff mobility. With respect to the above mentioned priorities, a network of cooperating institutions has been created not only within almost all participating countries but also in the Americas, Asia, and North Africa. In total, more than 160 universities and many other institutions, including among others the WIPO and the Czech Centres abroad, participate in the exchange.

One of the long-term objectives of MUP is not only to extend new partnerships in all participating countries, but also to further advance collaboration with countries that are of special academic interest for the university with regard to the fields of specialisation (e.g. Asian Studies) and scientific activities (e.g. research centres focusing on the Asian-Pacific area, the Middle East, or Latin America) implemented at MUP. The aim is to be achieved while strictly maintaining geographic equilibrium of the existing partnerships.

The advancement of student and teacher mobility laid strong foundations for closer cooperation with international partners in joint research projects as well as other types of cooperation, e.g. implementation of double or joint degree programmes. In the coming period, students of Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral Degrees shall remain the principal target group. MUP inspires and supports its students in making use of all available options, i.e. to combine both the study stay and traineeship abroad. The practice has shown that participation in student mobility significantly raises the graduates' chances of finding employment as international experience of job applicants is highly valued by employers. MUP also encourages administrative and academic staff to foster their professional growth by participating in international mobility. By the same token, they are encouraged to establish new contacts for further cooperation on joint projects within the LLP or joint publications.

MUP has entered into a Double Degree agreement with four of its ERASMUS+ partner universities: Nottingham Trent University, SRH University Berlin, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, University of Trento. This type of cooperation is subject to a special internal approval process that consists in the following steps: the head of the relevant department reviews the content of the study plans in question, the Vice-Rector for External Relations and Development makes the assessment of the suggested cooperation with respect to the internal regulations of the university, and finally, the Rector of the university validates the agreement by affixing his signature to the final document. A selection procedure of

candidates who wish to participate in Double Degree programmes has also been established and it is applicable to both the existing and newly formed partnerships. In the selection procedure, the competences of the candidates are thoroughly considered on the level of knowledge of the relevant language, expertise in the given field of study, and motivation to participate in the programme. MUP envisages to work on steady expansion of Double Degree programmes and to strive to find suitable partners in order to prepare its first Joint Degree programmes.

MUP takes part only in LLP projects that have direct impact on academic (educational, research) activities implemented at MUP or that contribute to the development of the university, create new international opportunities for students, and support fresh graduates. One of the objectives of MUP is also to disseminate the outcomes of research activities and to use its experts for activities aimed at areas outside HEIs (members of the public, secondary schools). Due to its strong administrative background, MUP is able to organise its projects independently in full extent, but is also opened to joining consortia with other institutions. Four main areas of project implementation are already in practice at MUP.

First, MUP actively organises or participates in projects that complement specialisations conducted at the university on an international level (IPs, summer schools). In these projects, representatives of partner institutions meet and share their experience both on the level of academics and students.

Second, MUP supports and participates in joint projects and activities that aim at the development of a particular specialisation of study in cooperation with international partners (by sharing of acquired knowledge and good practice).

Third, MUP focuses on further mobility of graduates by enabling them to participate in traineeships in which they can make use of the knowledge acquired during their studies and gain practical experience. The objective of MUP is to form closer cooperation with the commercial sector and to help graduates within one year of the completion of their studies to enhance their professional portfolio. This type of mobility also provides MUP with inspiration and ideas for innovation of study programmes with respect to the employability of graduates.

Last but not least, MUP focuses on the engagement of academics in broader international research projects that are based on the areas of specialisation of the university in general and of individual departments.

Participation of MUP in the ERASMUS+ programme constitutes a key platform to reach new experience, knowledge, and innovation and it is of great benefit not only for MUP students, but also for members of faculty and staff. Steady influx of new students, despite the negative effects of the declining demographic curve, proves that the university offers specialisations with an interesting curriculum that is in favour of graduate employability. MUP also implements the “School without Barriers” programme that ensures special support to students with physical disabilities. 75 students with disabilities make use of a barrier-free access to the university premises and of comprehensive support services. Students included in the programme also participate in exchange programmes (study stays and traineeships).

MUP cooperates with practitioners (including international partners) in order to meet the growing requirements of graduates’ practical competences on the Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctoral Degree levels. Students of the relevant specialisations are required to complete practical training in institutions or companies and gain experience necessary to increase their competitiveness in the job market (e.g. students of the specialisation of Industrial Property often pass their training in the Industrial Property Office, practical training is also available as

a free-choice course in the specialisation of International Business; the Doctoral Degree in International Relations and European Studies is implemented in cooperation with the Institute of International Relations).

Four specialisations conducted in English provide MUP with firm grounds for cooperation with partner universities abroad and for the mobility of students, members of faculty, and staff. These activities reinforce general knowledge and professional and intercultural competences and create favourable conditions for higher employability in the job market. MUP cooperates with universities in 28 countries participating within the ERASMUS+ programme and with universities in 25 other countries outside of the EU. In total, the university collaborates with 165 partner universities worldwide. In addition to that, MUP organises ERASMUS+ traineeships for its graduates.

MUP strengthens the “knowledge triangle” that links education, research, and business. Eight research centres operate at MUP and carry out research activities; MUP also encourages its students to active participation in research and publication by the means of internal grants.

Being a private university, MUP does not receive government subsidies. The legal status of MUP (i.e. public benefit company) ensures that any profit from tuition and other fees is being reinvested. MUP is very flexible in the redistribution of funds in order to reinforce the quality of instruction and the strategic development of the university.