

Heidelberg University of Education

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ERASMUS Charter for Higher Education 2021-2027

European Policy Statement

Heidelberg University of Education supports **the commission communication on a renewed EU agenda for higher education** of 30.05.2017.

With the current **structural and development plan** for the years 2017 to 2021 (STEP), the university is in many respects in line with the renewed EU agenda. The principles set out in the structural and development plan 2017 to 2021 will apply in the day-to-day life of the university and will do so also beyond 2021. The structural and development plan to be set up for the years 2022 to 2027 will also reflect the renewed EU agenda. A reference to the renewed EU agenda is recommended.

The **European Policy Statement** presents the university with its specific profile and links the renewed EU agenda, the strategic orientation of the university and the concrete actions planned in the Erasmus programme.

The **Heidelberg University of Education** is an educational university with a university profile. It is a place for teaching and research in the educational sciences, in the specialist sciences and didactics of the subjects taught at general schools, in vocational training, in special education with its special fields, and in the competence fields of early childhood education, health, rehabilitation and lifelong learning. Its courses of study combine research and teaching and aim at a high level of professional expertise, critical judgement, professional and social autonomy and responsible participation. In research, it offers excellent opportunities for linking disciplinary perspectives, theory-based interest in knowledge, and the question of concepts for justified action in practical fields.

The teaching profession-related Bachelor's and Master's **programmes** in primary and secondary education and in special education form the core of the range of courses offered. In addition, there are courses of study in early childhood and elementary education, prevention and health promotion as well as the master's courses of study in engineering pedagogy, educational sciences, e-learning and media education. Students of the university broaden their

profile in numerous **additional qualifications**. The Heidelberg University of Education also works together with the University of Heidelberg within the framework of the **Heidelberg School of Education (HSE)** to design a joint teacher-training master's programme with the profiles of secondary level I and grammar school. The university offers a **doctoral programme** as well as postgraduate qualifications, such as the habilitation or junior professorship. At the University of Education, approximately 4,600 students are currently aiming for an education-related degree. The **academic staff** consists of 295 persons, 66 of which are full-time professors, 2 professorship representatives and 5 junior professors. The scientific support staff comprises 122 persons (2019). With the Center for International Teacher Education (CITE), a transfer center in the "Transfer Together" project, and the Center for Education for Sustainable Development (BNE-Zentrum), which were all founded in 2018, and the eco-garden, which has been in existence for many years, as well as the **profiles of internationalisation, study, teaching and continuing education, and of research, transfer and digitalisation**, for which the Rectorate is responsible, the university has focused on continuous **modernisation and dialogue with society**. The university maintains more than 50 international **university and school cooperations**, which form a very good foundation for the new Erasmus generation. The cooperations are to be deepened and expanded in the period starting in 2021 under the theme of the renewed EU agenda.

The Heidelberg University of Education is based on a **comprehensive concept of education** that has an impact on all areas of social and cultural life and on the entire life span. This is the basis for the continuation of a diversification in research and teaching that extends the central field of teacher education. The rich cultural and social life at the university, initiated by projects such as drama education and the subjects of sport, music and art, connects its members with each other and equally enters into discourse with the interested public through performances, exhibitions and other events.

Among the **central profile-building elements** of the Heidelberg University of Education is

- that the university appreciates diversity as enriching its profile and accepts and uses it in research and teaching in a participatory and inclusive manner,
- that it recognises the excellent opportunities for strengthening the professional training of specialists in the design of educational processes in Heidelberg and combines this with a comprehensive concept of education,
- that it further deepens its regional networking and combines it with a global perspective,
- that it further strengthens educational research and also uses it to develop concepts for justified practical action.

In its **structural and development plan**, the university focuses on five concepts to which it feels particularly committed in its further development:

- Students first
- Research and development
- Continuous quality management
- Cooperations local – global
- Societal responsibility

Its **fields of action** focus on:

- Educational and subject-specific research
- Heidelberg as a location for teacher training
- Heterogeneity and inclusion
- Lifelong learning
- Internationalisation and regional networking
- Modern university under media and IT aspects
- High quality standards

These guiding ideas and fields of action essentially determine the goals and measures of the university management, the faculties and the various work units of the university. In this way, the university corresponds closely with the **renewed EU agenda**. The university fully supports the idea that "(...) effective education and training systems are a cornerstone of just, open and democratic societies and of sustainable growth and employment".

The Heidelberg University of Education sees itself in its responsibility for society and has also emphasized this in its **internationalisation strategy**:

"The University of Education carries out research and teaching in the field of education in an international context and qualifies people in pedagogical professions - no longer only for the regional, but also for the national and international job market. With this opening, the Heidelberg University of Education is reacting to the demands of the globalised world and a society characterised by a high degree of diversity. Only in this way will the Heidelberg University of Education be able to continue to help shape social developments in the future. Education today is inconceivable without the guiding principles of internationality and diversity, because education implies an interest in and recognition of the diversity of cultures and ways of life in the common world society. As a university of education, the Heidelberg University of Education recognises its special responsibility here, as well as its competence in teaching and

research, and thus positions itself in the educational landscape of the universities in the state of Baden-Württemberg and in the Federal Republic of Germany".

Many aspects of the Commission's **renewed EU agenda** are university practice at Heidelberg University of Education. In its close ties to the region and its cooperation with educational institutions, it makes the required "(...) contribution to meeting the social and democratic challenges facing Europe (...). The Heidelberg University of Education is committed to being inclusive and open to talented people, regardless of their background. The "**Anneliese Wellensiek Centre for Inclusive Education**" to be opened in October 2020 can be seen as an example of this. Half of the jobs to be filled here will be filled by people with disabilities, who will contribute their specific expertise. The University of Education works in close dialogue with the city of Heidelberg, the region and its educational institutions. It is thus in keeping with the renewed EU agenda, a "learning community close to its citizens and integrated into their communities".

Digitalisation is an integral part of the university's innovation concept. This is why it has adopted a digitalisation strategy. In practice, the university sees good opportunities for development in research, study and teaching as well as in administration.

Equal opportunities and unhindered access to education is a central concern of the university. It supports and promotes people with disabilities with its appropriate facilities. With its admissions system for study places, it assesses commitment as being equivalent to the Abitur grades.

Environmentally friendly action is a concern of the university. It sees this as the basis for the development of society and the preservation of the resources of our world. This is why the university has established the „BNE-Zentrum“, which on the one hand bundles and makes visible activities and on the other hand gives impulses to the university and the educational discourse in the state of Baden-Württemberg.

The university explicitly supports and promotes **research and innovation** and provides resources for this purpose. With its "Graduate School", it supports young scientists. More than 110 young people are doing their doctorates at the Heidelberg University of Education and will contribute their expertise to society.

The **digitalisation** of administrative procedures for student mobility and the introduction of the European student card are highly welcome at the university.

The Heidelberg University of Education will continue to focus on international mobility. In addition to physical mobility, it will expand and further develop forms of blended learning in the coming years, as has already been successfully implemented in accompanying international internships.

The Heidelberg University of Education expressly welcomes the **orientation of the new Erasmus programme generation** and will be committed to its successful implementation. It sees the programme as an excellent opportunity for the modernisation and development of the university, particularly in the fields of inclusion, digitalisation and civic involvement.

In the spirit of the renewed EU agenda, the university would like to assume responsibility in the new generation of programmes for "**higher education as an indispensable building block for prosperous, inclusive and democratic societies**". In order to achieve this, the university is also committed to the creation of a European Educational Area and its "vision of a Europe in which

- stays abroad for study and learning purposes become the norm,
- school and university degrees are recognised throughout the EU,
- it is common to speak two languages in addition to the mother tongue,
- everyone has access to quality education, regardless of their social and economic background, and
- people are fully aware of their European identity, Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity".

Heidelberg University of Education intends to participate in all three key actions during the duration of the new Erasmus programme.

Key action 1, which focuses on the mobility of individuals, will continue to be the action with which visible increases in mobility figures are to be achieved. The university will ensure unrestricted and equal access to the Erasmus programme during the programme period. Measurable successes can be achieved here, especially with the planned measures to increase the participation of previously less represented and disadvantaged groups.

In **key action 1**, the "Erasmus without Paper" project will be introduced and implemented with all the associated instruments. This will further develop digitalisation at the university in an important field of work. Employees and students alike will thus improve their digital skills. As part of key action 1, students will benefit more than before from digital learning formats, including blended learning. The good results that the university has achieved, particularly in

supporting international school internships, will be systematically expanded during the programme period.

Key action 1 will continue to be implemented in the International Office.

Key action 2 and **key action 3** contain great opportunities for European networking and renewal of institutions in the tertiary education sector. In key action 2, the programme lines of knowledge alliances and capacity building fit well with the profile of the University of Education. Key action 3 focuses on civic education and thus also offers opportunities for cooperation in the school sector. Involvement of the university will continue to depend on the areas of interest of the university's teachers and researchers who are willing to get involved here. The university will examine how the existing incentive system (allowances in the W salary) can be made even more effective here.

Key actions 2 and 3 are supported in a coordinated manner for all six universities of teacher education by the **EU Research Department** of the universities of teacher education. The service unit was established in 2002 by the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg with the aim of making the funding programmes of the European Union accessible to the universities of teacher education and to initiate EU projects and is located at the University of Teacher Education Ludwigsburg.

The EU Research Department provides advice and support to scientists

- who are planning transnational projects and are looking for funding opportunities
- who have inquiries from partners regarding project cooperation
- with the application or project implementation
- who are interested in general information about EU funding structures and opportunities
- who have already carried out EU projects and would like to pass on their experiences

The website of the Research Department provides information about current EU calls for proposals and ongoing EU projects of the universities of teacher education. It calls for proposals for start-up funding available from the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts Baden-Württemberg.

The planned **impact** on Heidelberg University of Education through participation in the Erasmus programme will relate **to four fields**: Innovation through digitalisation, networking

within and outside the university, linking higher education profile with intra- and extra-university civic engagement, environmentally friendly action.

Innovation Through Digitalisation

Heidelberg University of Education sees great opportunities for innovation in digitalisation. This is already reflected in the fact that the area of responsibility of the currently acting Prorector is clearly profiled as "Research, Transfer and Digitalisation". In June 2019, the senate unanimously approved the "Strategy for a University of Education in a World Increasingly Shaped by Digitalisation" (in short: Digitalisation Strategy). In doing so, the university pursues the goal of researching how to deal with digitalisation in the context of education, innovating its teaching accordingly, and transferring its expertise to society.

With the implementation of the new Erasmus programme and the measures planned for the next few years in the "Erasmus without Paper" project, internationalisation and digitalisation will be combined. The concrete projects for the conclusion of digital Inter Institutional Agreements, the introduction of the digital Learning Agreement, the Erasmus + App for students and the European Student Card will lead to a clearly visible improvement in administrative processes, to the highest level of commitment for students with regard to automatic recognition and ultimately, after the successful implementation of all instruments, to up-to-date solutions that are convenient for all parties involved. Internationalisation and the European dimension will gain even greater visibility in the university.

Networking Within and Outside the University

The planned measures will lead to strong networking within the university, since both in the implementation of the measures related to the "Erasmus without Paper" project and in the planned support of previously underrepresented participants in the mobility programmes, the rectorate and the operating institutions (International Office, student affairs office, academic examinations office, IT departments and interest groups) will cooperate closely and in a coordinated manner.

In the Erasmus project, the university's external networking focuses on cooperation with the Studierendenwerk Heidelberg, which is playing a major role in the introduction of the European student ID card. Where possible, this should be done in coordination with the other universities in Heidelberg. The International Office of the Heidelberg University of Education will propose to the Studierendenwerk Heidelberg that a round table be set up. The transfer centre will play an important role here as a partner of the International Office.

Environmentally Friendly Action

Environmentally friendly action is a substantial action for many members of the university and especially for many students. The call of the new Erasmus programme should be used as an initiative to make existing activities of the university more visible. In addition, actors should also be brought into dialogue with each other through participation in the mobilities. This can take place in all mobilities and thus involve students, staff and teachers.

The above-mentioned measures will already be initiated in 2020 and gradually implemented from 2021 onwards. With regard to the "Erasmus without Paper" project, all instruments are to be implemented in 2021 and 2022. The European Student Card should be usable for students from 2025.

Linking Higher Education Profile With Intra- and Extra-University Civic Engagement

The profile of the university, its teachers, staff and students includes diverse initiatives and commitment to society. The core task of the university in the field of teacher education alone means a close connection to society through the institution of school, where teachers and students actively act and are oriented towards research and teaching. Teachers and students are also involved in numerous projects. Making this commitment more visible in the university and networking the civically engaged participants in the Erasmus programme with each other is an important goal in the new programme period. In the future, membership in the university network "Education through Responsibility" is also possible. The measures are to begin in 2021 and be expanded with each year of the programme.

The goal is to increase the number of active participants in the programme. The aim is to double the number by 2028. This seems realistic, as all members of the higher education institution are guaranteed transparent and equal-opportunity access to the programme and, during the programme period, previously underrepresented groups will receive special support in terms of counselling and funding. Students should also be made aware of the opportunities offered by the BaFöG abroad in all information and counselling formats. The International Office will suggest to the university management that a "scholarship on top" be set up to guarantee further financial support for students in particular need.

The implementation of the mobility programme is the responsibility of the **International Office**. In order to achieve the above-mentioned goals, this office will develop a new implementation strategy that focuses on even stronger and binding networking within the university under the motto "shared and coordinated responsibility".

With regard to quality assurance, the International Office is supported by the **Quality Management Office**.

In addition to individual mobility, the university sees very good opportunities for development in key action 2 programmes. It is currently implementing a capacity building project "Foreign Language Teacher Training Capacity Development as a Way to Ukraine's Multilingual Education and European Integration" and is supported here by the Center for International Teacher Education (CITE). The university will participate in the new programme period with new projects as required.

The **Erasmus programme is the most sustainable programme in the field of international relations** that the Heidelberg University of Education implements. It has been successfully involved in the programme since its inception in 1986. A large number of students, graduates, doctoral candidates, staff and teachers have benefited from the programme over the past 30 years. Students, teachers and staff from the participating partner universities have enriched and raised the profile of the University of Education. On the one hand, this trend will continue in the next programme period; on the other hand, the university will experience an additional **development and modernisation** boost through the objectives in the areas of digitalisation, inclusion, civic engagement and environmentally friendly action.

Heidelberg, 19.05.2020: Submission of the project proposal ERASMUS+ Key Action 1 (KA1): Erasmus University Charta to the European Commission.

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