

## Erasmus+ Policy Statement

Biberach University of Applied Sciences (HBC) has its focus on the areas of construction and real estate, energy, engineering, business administration and biotechnology. HBC is a transformative university and addresses to the global challenge of sustainability by anchoring the topic of bioeconomy across all study disciplines to make a relevant contribution to a more environmentally sustainable society.

In accordance with its modernization and internationalization strategy, HBC has set the goal to equip students with professional qualifications, international and intercultural competences, digital competence and awareness of environmental sustainability. HBC not only wants to understand technical, economic and social developments retrospectively, but also to recognize and be aware of them by forward-looking at an early stage in order to develop solutions by setting appropriate topics. Particularly HBC graduates should later be able to act successfully and responsibly in their professional, social and private lives.

Accordingly, students should not only be educated professionally during their studies. They should also be supported in the acquisition of key qualifications, especially intercultural competence. This intercultural competence plays a central role in times of global challenges in a world brought closer together by mobility and digitalization. Hence, international extension in the study programs is necessary in order to raise these topics to a global perspective and to create awareness within the students and teachers.

In order to realize the goals of HBC's internationalization strategy, HBC is devoted to participate in the Erasmus+ program with focus of the key action of mobility by encouraging participation in international activity and recognizing mobility outcomes; expanding and improving the quality of student and staff mobility in close cooperation with partner universities within Europe and worldwide; increasing English-language lectures and enhancing international and intercultural perspectives in curriculum of study programs; supporting diversity and inclusive in education and engaging in the Erasmus+ digitalization process.

By participation in the Erasmus+ program, HBC aims to achieve the following:

- Increase the number of incoming and outgoing mobility
- Strengthen cooperation with partner universities
- Enhance intercultural competence among members of HBC
- Promote of value and meaning of the EU and European citizenship
- Encourage digital and lifelong learning

HBC has implemented various systemic and target group-specific measures to achieve the goals. The promotion of exchange abroad targeted prospective students before the start of their studies, so that an exchange abroad will become the norm for students. In addition, the university has launched short-term programs such as international summer schools and

international teaching laboratories to motivate students to spend longer periods abroad as part of their studies.

HBC has established the 'Bachelor International' in all Bachelor programs, which offers study-related stays abroad in the form of a study and internship semester abroad. The 8-semester Bachelor International has uniform statutes and recognition mechanisms across the university and is accredited. Elements of intercultural training, English language skills, peer-to-peer mentoring for international students are also embedded in the Bachelor International program. Similarly, the 'Master International' program, which was successfully established in 2018/19, is to be implemented to other master's programs at the university after a pilot phase in order to be able to offer a uniform internationalization programme also on the master's level. As a double-degree with the University in Tucuman (Argentina), the master's program in Engineering Management is another flagship of HBC.

The most intense and effective intercultural experience is the integration into another culture in the form of a study or internship abroad. In addition, intercultural competencies can also be acquired in virtual formats, by studying at home or within a blended mobility. To this end, the HBC is breaking new ground by developing new teaching, interdisciplinary and cross-faculty formats in which internationalization is directly integrated, for example in summer schools or digital formats. These formats combine international and intercultural aspects in several dimensions and are also intended to intensify academic exchange between teachers and partner universities. These programs are also aiming to attract more incoming exchange students to HBC, which will provide a more diverse and international learning environment at HBC campuses.

Through the Erasmus+ program, HBC will continue to promote an effective, efficient, sustainable and inclusive higher education system, which equips graduates with qualities to meet global challenges and to make significant contribution to innovation in the other areas of society.