Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain
a) how you choose your partners,
b) in which geographical area(s) and
c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees.

The University Plan has Internationalisation as one of its four themes and outlines the following aims to develop the University internationally:
a) undertake high quality, ground-breaking research that will have an impact on thinkers, policymakers, and business leaders world-wide;
b) develop programmes that prepare students to succeed in the modern global economy;
c) create opportunities for international exchange with high quality institutions, for both students and staff and
d) promote and publicise our strengths on the international stage.

The objectives of the International Strategy are grouped into three distinctive areas:
1) academic endeavour and opportunity,
2) reputation building, stakeholder engagement and income generation and
3) embedding internationalisation into the York community.

To build international activity which is rooted in the academic strengths of the university, we will establish a range of measures to encourage and support international links in the areas of research, teaching and knowledge exchange. These will be founded on the university's academic strength and the long-term research ambitions of departments and interdisciplinary centres, and will include research mobility funds, seminar and conference support, exchange and other mobility programmes, support for early career academics, and a programme of international profile-building.

Supporting the strategy are a number of key working groups, committees and support offices whose responsibility it is to ensure that strategic intentions can be implemented successfully. The International Relations office is central to this methodology and provides guidance on international mobility to staff, students, alumni and other stakeholders.

a) Collaboration with international institutions forms an essential component of the university's intention to affirm its position as a leading global higher education institution. The university monitors the development of universities, research institutes and other educational establishments in our key markets and researches the education environment worldwide to ensure that our strategic alliances bring benefit to the university in educational, political, economic, social and cultural ways. As part of this we will continue to map existing links and ensure that our most important alliances have a critical mass of work and personal relationships to support and sustain them. We will develop agreements of real substance with institutions which are a good fit for York, either holistically or in important teaching, research or knowledge exchange areas.

b) Through membership of the Worldwide Universities Network, Santander Universities and other European and non-European frameworks and research collaborations, York has established sustainable links in five continents, providing a firm platform for future development. Of
particular focus are strategic partnerships in China, India, South Africa, North and South America and Europe. Our European Strategy group (incorporating representatives from International Relations, Recruitment and Admissions, European Research and Enterprise and Innovation offices) provides strategic direction for the development of future European university links and a mechanism for reviewing and monitoring existing partnerships in the light of the objectives and activities possible through the new programme.

c) Objectives:

1) to maintain and develop mobility activities across the university’s departments and support offices to foster an environment in which international student and staff mobility is encouraged, supported and recognized

2) to improve cultural, social and environmental competencies and prepare students for the global employment market.

3) to expand the portfolio of opportunities available to students and staff in order to increase participation to include options such as summer schools, short courses and internships

4) to encourage departments to embed academic and placement mobility as core activities to ensure that as many students and staff benefit from the scheme We aim to expand the number of taught degree programmes offering a "year abroad" option, develop elective placements for vocational courses and coordinate international field trips and identify opportunities in particular for PG level students through the development of new joint degree programmes. We wish to support the careful growth of distance learning, particularly to enable flexible professional development at postgraduate level within a global context.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme.

The university aims to develop new cooperation projects with EU and non-EU institutions, particularly through the new programme. Such developments are consistent with, and encouraged by the commitment in the University Plan to ‘internationalisation’ as one of its four key themes. This is reflected in the current Learning and Teaching Strategy 2010-15 (Theme 3:Developing a high quality portfolio of programmes), which aims to support and build on the growing international links in departments.

The University of York is proud to be a founder member of The Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) and recognises the importance of networks and business links as a foundation for joint initiatives in teaching and training, working together to promote research and teaching collaborations beyond the scope of an individual university. The aim is to strengthen international teaching collaboration through virtual networking tools, access to video-seminars, as well as conferences and workshops. Academic staff, early stage researchers, and postgraduate students are encouraged to visit other institutions to access expertise and world class facilities and the university will seek to ensure that funding is available to support activities with partners.

The university has a strong tradition of collaborative research and knowledge exchange. This work is able to take place through commercial partnerships and through a range of funding opportunities available to organisations from funders from local development groups to EU agencies. The Enterprise and Innovation Office will be involved in international knowledge transfer, CPD, distance learning and business consultancy.

A range of qualitative and quantitative measures will be developed so that progress, effectiveness and success of individual initiatives can be evaluated. They will be developed in partnership with academics, support staff and stakeholders to agree a consistent view on what constitutes "success" or "effectiveness".
Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve.

Priorities of the Modernisation Agenda are:

1) To increase the number of higher education graduates; the university continues to show strong growth projections for student graduates (projected +9% between 2012-13 and 2015-16) and recruits inclusively from all socially and culturally diverse backgrounds. York offers a wide range of activities and engagement opportunities for schools, parents and teachers at local, regional and national level through our widening participation programmes.

2) To improve the quality and relevance of higher education; the university Student Employability Strategy for 2010-15 provides support to departments to help develop the employability skills of students. Each department has a Careers Liaison Officer and central resources include the online Interactive Careers Service. The York Award, highly valued by graduate employers, is an employability certificate awarded alongside a student's degree. York has both Researcher Development and Professional Development teams offering programmes e.g. PGCAP (Masters level academic practice programme for new academics) and online staff training resources. Yorkshare VLE provides a platform for students and staff to share a secure collaborative learning resources.

3) To strengthen quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation; The Centre for Global Programmes has been developed to provide a portfolio of international mobility opportunities. Plans for integrated programming and shorter mobility options will open access to previously limited vocational and post-graduate cohorts. Student systems developments and an international version of the York award will provide further recognition of knowledge gained abroad. York is involved in developing doctoral training centres for postgraduate researchers such as the White Rose Consortium centre for social sciences.

4) To strengthen the "knowledge triangle"; the university has a proven track record in developing excellent links with local, regional, national and international business networks and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, such as Science City York, an organisation formed with City of York Council to develop a strong knowledge-based local economy. We also have a strong entrepreneurship culture - the Student Enterprise Space is a dedicated centre for student-run businesses, with high specification computing and office facilities and grants are available for students interested in social enterprise. York is a member of the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project (part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund).

5) To improve governance and funding; the University Plan 2009-2019 states excellence as a key objective. Academic and operational excellence is demonstrated through the recruitment of high quality students and staff. York is home to the Centre for Excellence in the Teaching and Learning of Enterprise and has received a THE award for management and leadership courses and for women in science through Athena Swan.