



Erasmus Policy Statement

The Mission Statement of Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) is to provide student-centred, career-focused education, training and applied research programmes for our diverse cohort of learners within a professional and supportive environment. We are fully committed to intensive engagement with regional business, enterprise and social communities while maintaining our global orientation.

The Institute has developed programmes in Business, Engineering and Science at short cycle, 1st cycle and 2nd cycle degree levels. The Schools also offer programmes at 3rd cycle degree levels. Many academic programmes have been developed with a practical component with significant input from industry representatives. The commitment to practice and expanding research links is articulated through close co-operation with regional, national, community and international industrial organisations and educational institutions. Project/research work is an integral part of many programmes.

The Institute has historically participated in ERASMUS mobility programmes for students and staff and has established a wide range of trans-European contacts. The internationalisation strategy of the institute has encouraged collaboration with higher education institutes in non-European countries outlined in the Asia Strategy launched by the Irish Government in 2000. Certain priority markets have been identified, namely China, India and Malaysia and academic agreements of cooperation have been signed with institute in these markets. AIT is planning to organically deepen these international links in the coming years with particular reference to 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle degree programmes. Stage agencies such as Enterprise Ireland have led education missions to markets in Asia. AIT has selected staff to participate in such missions to establish links with institutes interested in exchange of students and staff and collaboration on research projects. The President and International Office staff have represented the Institute at numerous trade missions led by Irish government departments in international markets.

The Institute's participation in European programmes to date has demonstrated to students and staff that academic collaboration with Higher Education Institutions throughout the EU benefits students, staff and the institution itself in educational, cultural and social terms. AIT

has established links in Non-European markets such as North America, Asia and Africa. The cultural and intellectual enrichment derivable from a genuinely articulated international dimension will contribute to the formation of graduates with a holistic appreciation of cultural values and contributes to their employability.

The Institute is deeply committed to the principle of transferability of students between partner institutions in Europe and it has adopted structures such as modularisation and ECTS to facilitate outward student mobility on an expanding scale. The Institute's Strategic Plan prioritises specific areas of strategic interest in terms of the internationalisation of the campus, mobility of researchers, its programme modules, and its programme evaluation procedures as processes consonant with best international practices. The AIT Equal Opportunities Policy highlights the need for delivery of an excellent quality service to students with disabilities, special needs and from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Finally, it is the overall objective of the Institute to position AIT among the leading group of Institutes offering a quality international educational experience to its student population across all programmes from part-time to full-time learners/researchers. Participation in mobility programmes by students and staff is mechanism by which the Institute may achieve this aim.