



Strategy: The Inclusion of Participants to the Erasmus Programme

Background: Our university intends to implement the Erasmus programme considering the diversity of possible participants. Therefore, we implement measures to ensure and, if necessary, increase equity (= access to the programme) and inclusion (= participation in the programme).

Assumption: The international mobility of our university community is influenced by certain characteristics and differs according to the personal contexts of each person. Both physical impairment and socio-economic factors do play a central role. Therefore, we identify these two factors as key areas for action. International exchange leads to the appreciation of diversity (intercultural experiences, different perspectives, new concepts of learning and teaching) and thus in turn leads to an increased level of diversity and inclusion within the participating universities.

Goal: We ensure or, if necessary, increase, the participation (inclusion) of underrepresented groups (due to the presence of the above characteristics) in the Erasmus programme. In this way, the programme and our university contribute to sustainability in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in its social dimension (especially goals 4, 10, 16 and 17).

Structure: This strategy lists barriers to equity identified below and derives target groups (incoming and outgoing students) from them. The measures presented address each of these target groups. Inclusion of the groups is the goal of this strategy and ensuring equity in the form of the measures outlined is the way to achieve it. The diversity of the participants in the Erasmus programme is the central indicator.

Barrier 1: Physical Impairment

Identified target groups:

- People with disabilities (with some proven status as person with impairment)
- People with chronic illness

Contact persons:

- Representative for people with disabilities: <https://www.burg-halle.de/hochschule/organisation/behindertenbeauftragte/>
- Representative for protection against discrimination: <https://www.burg-halle.de/hochschule/organisation/senat/schutz-vor-benachteiligung/>

At BURG Halle, we do have a settlement of inclusion for the integration, training, and employment of people with disabilities. It implements the existing legal regulations and requirements in the context of the University of Art and expressly includes the course of studies and thus all students.

State: May 2024



Measures to support and reach the target group:

- Incoming exchange students:

For this target group, there are specific frame conditions for a student exchange at BURG. Supporting those students in organizing a study period (see following information) is the most important measure.

If a student is planning an exchange at our university, this person shall notify the International Office as long before the intended period as possible. This should happen in due time before the application deadline to settle the conditions and determine whether the exchange can be realized according to the student's needs. The Department of Student and Academic Affairs will get in touch with the senate representative for students with disabilities and chronic conditions as well as the lecturer of the respective course. They will exchange ideas regarding the situation on the premises, teaching and other factors to convey this information to the student. In the case of an application, we kindly ask to precisely describe the needs in the cover letter.

In case of being accepted there is the possibility to offer a fellow student from our university as tutor for smaller tasks during the stay (e.g., pick up after arrival, inspecting the premises, campus tour.) However, this person does not replace an accompanying person if necessary. The university will support you in contacting our local student union in finding accommodation.

There is a distinction between the accessibility concerning all relevant persons and concerning only a specific person's disability. Our university tries to meet both requirements. One should consider the different building materials at BURG. They range from medieval structures under preservation orders – which can only be adapted to a limited extent – to new buildings that meet all requirements. Depending on the chosen faculty for the Erasmus stay, there are different study locations. The university has the art and design campuses, as well as the premises of the Hermes area and media centre. All locations are distinct further to their accessibility.

The *art campus* is in the very old structure of the lower castle of Burg Giebichenstein. There, our university has implemented automatic doors, railings, a toilet, ramps and step-free entrances in the "Kornhaus" lecture building, cafeteria and "jacquard" lecture room. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee for the accessibility of the seminar rooms on the upper floors. Most of the buildings used by students on the *design campus* are accessible by elevators. There are several accessible toilets for people with impairments. Ramps have the necessary gradient. The *central facilities* on the design campus, such as the library/media library as well as the cafeteria and the central lecture hall have a fully accessible parking lot, elevator and toilet. The *workshops* belong to the faculties; the central workshops are located on the design campus. Prior to an Erasmus exchange, it is necessary to obtain precise information about working conditions in the respective workshops. With prior notice, we may be able to provide temporary ramps or special parking spaces.

Every incoming student with physical impairments will remain an individual case, for which we must evaluate the specific requirements and options. Concerning the infrastructure for physical handicaps, the development at our university has fortunately advanced and our



university is constantly striving for improvements. This does not yet apply to facilities for students with visual or hearing impairments. BURG offers psychological counselling to students. However, we cannot fully guarantee this for the brief period of an Erasmus exchange and in a foreign language.

Summary: Handling applications from this target group:

1. The person concerned discusses the needs with the International Office of the home university. The student will obtain information about the possibilities of special financial support through the Erasmus program from there.
2. Transmission of the requirements to our university as part of the nomination.
3. Exchange between the International Office, our teaching staff of the programme and our senate representative. Evaluation whether the exchange is possible at our university and what things shall be provided (e.g. tutor as accompanying person, special requirements in the workspace, etc.).
4. Feedback to the applicant.
5. Application process: We do guarantee an equal treatment of the application (without advantages or disadvantages). If there is any impairment in the preparation of application documents, we will look for an individual solution with the department.
6. In case of acceptance: communication of special requirements regarding the provision of examination services. Individual solutions can be agreed between teachers and affected students.
7. If accepted, the student will inform whether they want to take up a place in the dormitory. The International Office supports communication with our local provider Studentenwerk Halle. That provider does offer needs-based housing options for people with disabilities. And will treat applications from this group with priority. The offer depends on the free capacity in the dormitories.

- Outgoing students:

Funding from Burg Giebichenstein Kunsthochschule Halle is primarily intended as financial support within the framework of the funding opportunities of the Erasmus programme, subject to available funding. The International Office provides information about the possibilities of Erasmus special funding in general information events and individual consultations. Before applying to a partner university, students are requested to notify the International Office of any existing degree of disability (according to the German classification GdB or other proof) or certificate of chronic illness. If you are accepted for the exchange, a fixed financial contribution to the regular monthly Erasmus scholarship (Top Up) is possible for people with proven disability or chronic illness. Important in both cases: the disadvantage does incur additional financial needs during the stay abroad. Alternatively, an individual application can be submitted, which can cover additional costs incurred abroad up to a certain amount



(depending on the corresponding Erasmus funding project) for the student and the accompanying person, possibly including a preparatory visit. The corresponding additional costs can be reimbursed, subject to the approval of the funding body (DAAD). The specific conditions may vary with the current Erasmus programme, thus prior consultation with the International Office is necessary.

When applying, the student must inform the International Office of the partner university of his/her needs and clarify what the local conditions are and whether an exchange is possible. The Department of Student and Academic Affairs at BURG will be happy to provide support in communicating with the partner university.

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Barrier 2: Socio-economic Disadvantages

Identified target groups:

- Students with children who accompany their parents abroad (additional financial burden)
- First-time university graduates within a family (parents without academic background) (fewer financial and personal resources)
- Working students (no marginal employment) as defined by the DAAD (additional financial burden and loss of earning opportunities due to stay abroad)

Contact persons:

- Representative for protection against discrimination: <https://www.burg-halle.de/hochschule/organisation/senat/schutz-vor-benachteiligung/>
- Representative for students with children: <https://www.burg-halle.de/hochschule/organisation/gleichstellung/studieren-mit-kind/>

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Measures to support and reach the target group:

- Incoming exchange students:

Our university has a day care centre for child care, which can be used if there is sufficient capacity. The International Office will be happy to put you in touch with them.

Further information: <https://www.burg-halle.de/hochschule/einrichtungen/burgkita/>

Students in these target groups should contact their home university for information on financial aid opportunities.

- Outgoing students:

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provided for in the Erasmus programme. It is always important to provide proof of the disadvantage, for example a birth certificate and confirmation of departure of the child for the target group of students with children. For first-degree students and working students, valid proof of belonging to this group is required in addition to a self-declaration. Information on this proof is published transparently on the website of the International Office.

The International Office of our university will pass on any increase in funding rates or expansion of target groups as quickly as possible. We will communicate this on the website or within the university to reach affected persons.

Measures for all barriers

Reaching participants:

We make all information on inclusion / special needs accessible on our website. Since we cannot guarantee the accessibility of the information on our website, we also provide individual counselling. We explain all the possibilities in the information offered by the International Office. We hold information events digitally, if possible, in order to reach more participants flexibly (e.g. people with impairments, children or other persons to take care of and with jobs who cannot come to campus at short notice). We are happy to refer to previous participants and pass on testimonials, if available and requested. We do only require low-threshold proof in order not to deter affected people from taking advantage of special financial support.

Monitoring:

When applying for the Erasmus programme, we ask students to indicate whether they belong to one of the target groups so that we can provide more specific advice to those concerned. We record the number of participants from those groups in each cohort and evaluate these figures. In the long term, we intend to have better data and to monitor the diversity of the participants.

Application process:

We do guarantee a fair application process with the same conditions for everyone. If a person has problems preparing documents due to special circumstances, we look for an individual solution. Applications from the target groups (incoming and outgoing) are always treated equally and are neither favored nor disadvantaged. We record if a person belongs to the group in the application process and pay attention to those applicants in order to be able to offer in-depth guidance and support if necessary.

This strategy has been developed and will be continuously updated by:

Coordinator International Office - Bernhard Frank Lange

Representative of Senate for studying with disabilities and chronic conditions - Karl Schikora

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