



Purpose

To provide a clear process for the approval and monitoring of international mobility partners.

Introduction

Global Galway provides central coordination, advice, and support to appraise and establish successful mobility partnerships across all University Schools and Colleges. New links and placement partnerships are considered and established within the following process. The purpose of this process is to ensure that the University meets its duty of care by taking reasonable steps to satisfy itself that the prospective partner organisation is an appropriate and safe environment in which students and staff can learn and teach; compatible with institutional, Global Galway and College strategic objectives; able to meet programme requirements in relation to reciprocity, practicalities, and benefits.

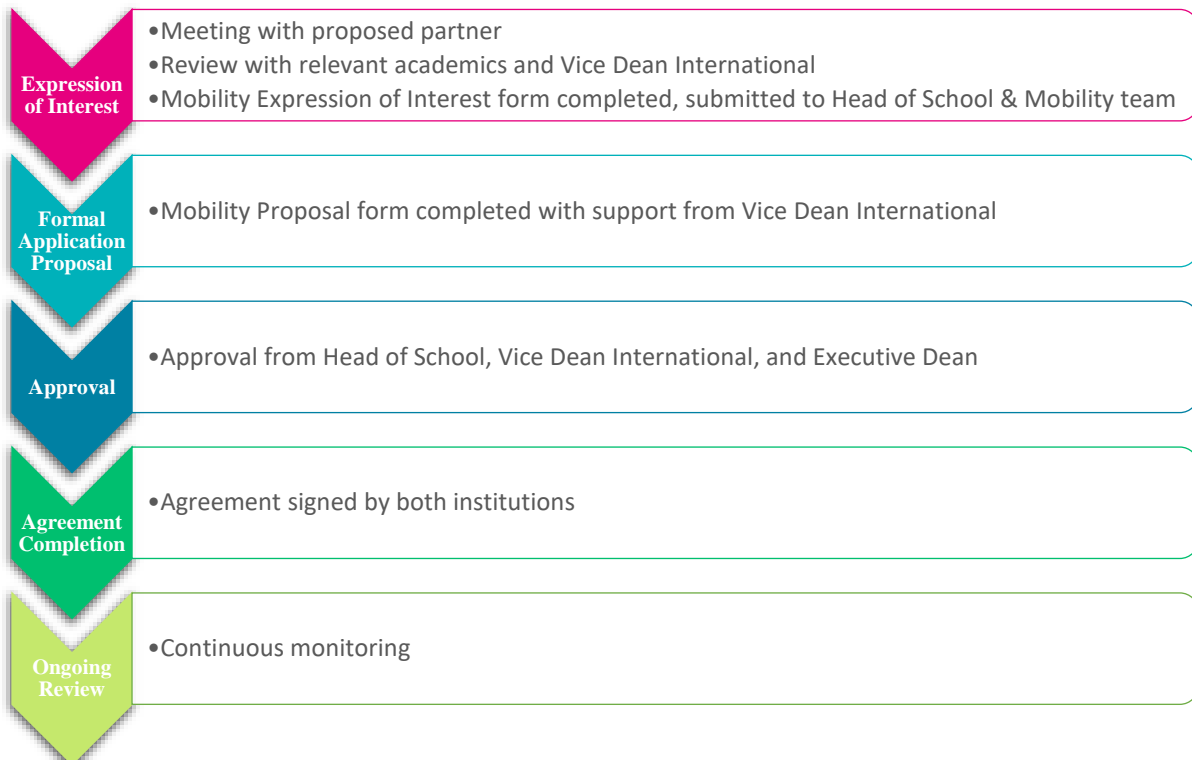
Partnership Processes and Policies

Higher education mobility partners are assessed as set out below.

NB Partnerships with international work-based placement organisations are assessed and managed by the Career Development Centre (CDC). ([Appendix 1.1](#))

Mobility Partnership Establishment Process

The following process outlines the key stages in new partnership formation.



Stage 1 - Expression of Interest

An initial partnership proposal typically arises from a discussion with a collaborator, a suggestion from a colleague, a proposal from Mobility & Partnership staff or contact from/with the proposed partner institution. In every event, an initial meeting must take place with the partner institution to establish key parameters of the relationship and mutual benefits expected.

It is important to note that given the requirement for alignment with overall institutional strategy, and in view of the administrative procedures involved in setting up and maintaining links, new agreements are not established in response to requests from individual students.

The partnership must be discussed with Faculty member(s) who are closest to the operations of the exchange (if they are other than the proposers) and the relevant Vice Dean International. This, and every, stage may involve support from/facilitation by Mobility & Partnership Team.

University of Galway is a member of the [ENLIGHT](#) European University Alliance which connects us with eight high-profile [partner](#) universities throughout Europe. The ENLIGHT member institutions are working together to increase mobility, teaching and research collaborations within the alliance. We advise checking if there is potential to meet your internationalisation needs through exploring the offerings of our ENLIGHT partners.

Important points to consider:

- The anticipated outcomes/goals of a partnership from both parties.
- How the agreement works in practice (numbers, balanced reciprocity, timing, capacity etc).
- Feasibility of committing to at least 5 years mobility by both institutions.
- If the partnership will conflict with existing agreements.
- Institution compatibility.

The following table details indicators of successful partnerships and proposers must refer to it in appraising new partnerships before moving to subsequent approvals.

1.1 New Mobility Partnerships – Indicators of Success Checklist

	Low Success Factors	High Success Factors
Ranking	Not ranked nationally or globally	Ranked similarly or above University of Galway nationally or globally
Academic	No partnership goals or outcomes set out by either/both institutions Lack of clarity on how agreement works in practice No clear demand for link Incomparable academic standards Semesters are not aligned resulting in students missing exams or modules No suitable modules identified Limited range of English-taught courses available at the appropriate level, for non-language exchanges Very low staff to student ratios ($\leq x$) Negative previous experience with partner	Evident compatible partnership goals and outcomes from both institutions Clear plan on numbers, timing and capacity for link between partners Very clear demand for link currently and in future years Comparable academic standards Semesters clearly aligned without impact on students Abundance of appropriate modules available. Sufficient courses available, and at appropriate level, for non-language student exchanges High staff to student ratios Previous positive history with partner

	<p>Lack of clarity on conversion of grades and credits.</p>	<p>Clear alignment & conversion of grades and credits</p> <p>Opportunity for virtual/blended learning</p> <p>Opportunities for placement/research experiences</p>
Practicality	<p>Expensive (cost of living, etc) / lack of funding support</p> <p>Located in area deemed unsafe to travel to by Department of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Located in politically unstable area</p> <p>Destination is hard to reach / unpopular</p> <p>Lacking in partner resources such as academic support, administrative back-up, library facilities, and accommodation support services</p> <p>Accommodation is scarce and/or very expensive</p> <p>Inadequate student mentoring and support</p> <p>Limited induction</p> <p>No appropriate disability support services</p> <p>Insufficient supports available in English for non-language student exchanges</p>	<p>Located in an easy to reach destination that is affordable and popular</p> <p>Full partner resources available to visiting students such as academic support, library services, and administrative back-up.</p> <p>On campus accommodation provided to students as part of agreement or accommodation support office available</p> <p>Reasonably priced accommodation readily available</p> <p>Comprehensive induction and student mentoring available</p> <p>Partner can offer satisfactory disability supports</p> <p>English-speaking support staff available at partner</p> <p>Opportunities for work/income on campus</p>
Strategy	<p>Does not fit into the overall strategic objectives of the College and the University's institutional values</p> <p>Does not promote diverse approaches to teaching, learning and research.</p> <p>Unfamiliarity with partner / no previous relationship</p> <p>Ethical concerns</p> <p>No sustainability policy/strategy</p> <p>Association with partner could have negative impact on University of Galway</p>	<p>Supports College's strategic objectives and aligns with the University's institutional values</p> <p>Will enhance approaches to teaching, learning and research</p> <p>Identifiable opportunities for staff collaboration and T&L development</p> <p>Positive previous association with partner institution</p> <p>Research excellence reputation</p> <p>Clear action plan compatible with strategy (incl. sustainability)</p> <p>Institutions in countries/regions with high future potential in research/innovation</p> <p>Association with partner will result in positive impact on University of Galway</p>
Management	<p>Significant costs or resources to implement</p> <p>Significant level of admin support required</p>	<p>Zero/cost resources required</p> <p>Low level of admin support to set up and support</p>

	<p>Conflict with currently established agreements</p> <p>Negative impact on current courses due to space/resource requirements</p> <p>Potentially difficult visa process</p>	<p>Access to third party and/or partner funding opportunities</p>
Other	<p>No evidence of student interest in destination.</p>	<p>Student feedback indicates strong interest in destination</p> <p>Site visit has taken place, and report indicates a positive evaluation regarding all practical and academic aspects of proposed exchange</p>

1.2 Expression of Interest Form (Mobility)

If the proposer(s) is satisfied that the new partnership reflects positively upon reference to the indicators above, an **Expression of Interest Form** ([Appendix 1.2](#)) must be submitted by e-mail to the relevant Head of School for approval. This form should at the same time be sent to the Global Galway Mobility Team for feedback/input. Global Galway commits to providing feedback within two weeks of receipt under normal working operations

With the approval of the Head of School, and feedback from the Mobility Team considered, the formal application proceeds as below.

Stage 2 – Application Proposal / Due Diligence Checks

The **Mobility Proposal Form** ([Appendix 1.3](#)) ensures compatibility with institutional and College strategic objectives, and that specific requirements in relation to reciprocity, practicalities, and student experience can be met. Four key areas must be taken into consideration for all new partnerships: Academic, Practical, Strategic, Management.

If a partner site visit has not already taken place, it is highly recommended it be arranged at this stage. Global Galway can assist with funding in some cases (limited to Erasmus destinations).

The form is completed by the proposer(s) with the support of the relevant **Vice Dean International**, signed by the **Head of School** and submitted to the **Executive Dean**.

Stage 3 + 4 Approval / Agreement

The **Executive Dean's** review and final signature completes the approval process.

Approved proposals are submitted to Global Galway for formalisation in a standardised Agreement.

The Agreement typically sets out the following:

- Agreement duration including anticipated start date
- Agreed Mobility exchanges between partners including subject area and levels where applicable
- Any specific limitations on the agreement
- Any prerequisites for incoming and outgoing students
- Process for termination of agreement
- Designated Academic Coordinators at each institution and their contact details
- Respective partners' responsibilities
- Country-specific and General Data Protection Regulation related clauses and context

Signatories will accord with University of Galway signatory protocols and should reflect parity of seniority in respect of the partner’s designated signatories.

All Agreements must be reviewed and approved by the University Solicitor prior to final signature except in the case of Erasmus agreements.

No mobility can take place until both parties have signed the Agreement. Global Galway aims to have agreements finalised and operational within 6 months of Executive Dean approval. Whilst an agreement may be signed by both institutions before the start of a new academic year, due consideration must be given to nomination deadlines at partner institutions.

The signing of a staff exchange agreement does not guarantee availability of funding for same.

New mobility partnerships must be reported to the University International Committee. The Committee would not be expected to make comment on partnerships which are solely designed to advance mobility of students or staff.

The Partnership Proposal Form and any resulting Agreements including addendums are held centrally by Global Galway.

Stage 5 - Ongoing Review

Each partnership agreement is subject to ongoing monitoring.

Monitoring Activity	Responsibility
Per Mobility	
International Travel Toolkit	<p>This kit provides information to help students enhance their safety and experience, and consider risks, and to inform students of requirements for international activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, completion and approval of a Mobility Assessment particular to each mobility, by the student and their College. • Completion of a Student Declaration outlining understanding of responsibilities around due diligence, good public health practices, insurance, and finances. • A valid insurance policy and understanding where exclusions apply regarding Covid-19 • Attendance at a minimum of one virtual Pre-departure Briefing • Submission of an Emergency Contact Form with details of next-of-kin • An Organisational Assessment (completed by employers) – only for Placements
Annually	
Outgoing Students	<p>Surveyed for feedback post arrival and post departure at partner university/workplace</p>
Study Abroad Officers / Student Placement Officer	<p>Experience during exchange such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues arising during the exchange/placement • ECTS credit achievement by outgoing students (where applicable) • Lack of communication from partner

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review cost of living expenses and other expenses for students 	
Staff Visit	A visit to any new mobility partners should occur within 2 years of agreement commencement.	Academic Staff Study Abroad Officers
Financial	Review financial commitments to management and support of partnership e.g., Bespoke orientation, expected cultural activities	Head of Global Mobility Global Experience Executive
Mid-Agreement / Every 5 years		
Mobility Flows	Flows are examined to ensure reciprocity. Engagement with all parties if link is underutilised on either side, to encourage mobility. Marketing supports offered.	Global Experience Coordinator
Significant Incident	Where an incident occurs, the partner may be re-assessed before the mid-agreement point.	Study Abroad Officer Programme Coordinator Student Placement Office Global Experience Executive
End of Agreement		
Mobility Flows	Flows are examined to ensure reciprocity. Where reciprocity has not been achieved, it must be proven that the link provides other benefits to the University. If this cannot be proven, the agreement will not be renewed.	Vice Dean International Global Experience Executive

Appendix

1.1 Organisation Assessment Policy for Work-Based Placements

Available from the [Career Development Centre](#)

1.2 Expression of Interest Form

[Mobility Expression of Interest Form.docx](#)

1.3 Mobility Proposal Form

[Mobility Proposal Form.docx](#)