

# Erasmus Connect Programme Overview

CONNECT- Intercultural Learning Network for Europe is a cross sectoral project, bringing together practitioners and experts from the university and youth sector, funded by the EU. The University of Limerick is one of many EU partners in the project. As part of the Irish project, an academic module to support students before, during and after their Erasmus exchange has been designed by Gisela Holfter and Maria Rieder at the Centre for Irish-German Studies at the University of Limerick. Details of the module are included below.



This module provides a 4 Step Programme for Students which is outlined below:

1. Pre-departure preparation (face2face): introduction to Erasmus+ and the online platform, first intercultural learning session.
2. Support (online, Moodle): before, after and in particular during the ERASMUS+ stay abroad; online lectures on intercultural topics in combination with exercises that allow for interaction and self-assessment.
3. EXPERIENCE MAP (online): tool for the documentation of experiences gained abroad and for exchanging practical information.
4. Re-entry (face2face and online): evaluation of and reflection on (intercultural) experiences, perspectives (knowledge transfer), networking, mentoring programme.

## 1. Pre-departure preparation

Face-to-face Modules with the students (approx. 8 hours in total)

### **Block I: self-awareness and self-perception**

- Definition of 'culture'
- Expectations of the stay abroad
- Developing personal learning objectives
- Reflection on identity and self-perception

### **Block II: Intercultural Acting**

- Activating their knowledge of cultural differences,
- Coping with situations of potential uncertainty
- Culture and Communication, Intercultural Communication
- Face negotiation theory and interactional strategies
- Simulation game: Barnga
- Meta-communicative strategies for intercultural acting

### **Block III: Culture specific workshops**

- Defining knowledge needs
- Dealing with structures of knowledge, critical reflection on stereotypes and prejudices
- Sharing knowledge: 'Jungle book' (insider guide) for target region
- Market place: acquiring new knowledge (ideally with students from target regions or returned Erasmus students)

### **Block IV: Narrative and media competence**

- raising awareness of the fundamentals of narration/reporting in an intercultural context, translating culture
- media concepts
- critically analyse media content
- presentation of the Experience Map and e-learning platform
- analysis of reports posted on the Experience Map and writing about their own university

## **2. Support while away**

Online modules: Contact [Gisela.holfter@ul.ie](mailto:Gisela.holfter@ul.ie) to learn about supporting students while they are away.

## **3. Experience Map**

This link provides peer reviews and information from students on Universities around Europe. <https://glocal-campus.org/mod/data/view.php?d=2> (may require login)

## **4. Returning students**

- a) Re-entry face-to-face modules (7 hours approx.)

Link to Online modules: Students are asked to bring in work they have done for the online modules

### **Block I: Reflection**

- Share experiences, reflect on their stay abroad
- Reverse Cultural Shock - questionnaire and finding strategies for smoothly settling back in to own country
- Reflecting on own and other people's writing on Experience Map

**Block II: Intercultural competence here and now**

- Concepts of cosmopolitanism and internationalisation and what this means for students, country etc., interculturality at home
- Employability and megatrends
- Simulation of job interview in the future

**Block III: CV/Portfolio**

- Raising awareness of the global labour market
- Presentation: global mindedness survey
- Select and highlight newly acquired skills on CV and/or online profiles (LinkedIn etc.)

**Block IV: Becoming a student mentor**

- Talking about the Connect 2.0 Mentoring programme (currently being developed, first international mentors' training workshop held in October 2017 in UL)
- Watch video where 2 students talk about what it means to be a mentor

**Block V: Exchange and closing**

- Meeting with future Erasmus students

**b) Re-entry online module**

Online Link for Students to give feedback (contact [Gisela.holfter@ul.ie](mailto:Gisela.holfter@ul.ie) for more information)